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The Princess

By D. H. LAWRENCE.

TO her father, she was The Princess. To her Boston aunts and uncles she was just *Dollie Urquhart, poor little thing.*

Colin Urquhart was just a bit mad. He was of an old Scottish family, and he claimed royal blood. The blood of Scottish kings flowed in his veins. On this point, his American relatives said, he was just a bit "off." They could not bear any more to be told *which* royal blood of Scotland blued his veins. The whole thing was rather ridiculous, and a sore point. The only fact they remembered was that it was not Stuart.

He was a handsome man, with a wide-open blue eye that seemed sometimes to be looking at nothing, soft black hair brushed rather low on his low, broad brow, and a very attractive body. Add to this a most beautiful speaking voice, usually rather hushed and diffident, but sometimes resonant and powerful like bronze, and you have the sum of his charms. He looked like some old Celtic hero. He looked as if he should have worn a greyish kilt and a sporran, and shown his knees. His voice came direct out of the hushed Ossianic past.

For the rest, he was one of those gentlemen of sufficient but not excessive means, who, fifty years ago, wandered vaguely about, never arriving anywhere, never doing anything, and never definitely being anything, yet well received and familiar in the good society of more than one country.

THE CALENDAR

He did not marry till he was nearly forty, and then it was a wealthy Miss Prescott, from New England. Hannah Prescott at twenty-two was fascinated by the man with the soft black hair not yet touched by grey, and the wide, rather vague blue eyes. Many women had been fascinated before her. But Colin Urquhart, by his very vagueness, had avoided any decisive connection.

Mrs. Urquhart lived three years in the mist and glamour of her husband's presence. And then it broke her. It was like living with a fascinating spectre. About most things he was completely, even ghostlily oblivious. He was always charming, courteous, perfectly gracious in that hushed, musical voice of his. But absent. When all came to all, he just wasn't there. "Not all there," as the vulgar say.

He was the father of the little girl she bore at the end of the first year. But this did not substantiate him the more. His very beauty and his haunting musical quality became dreadful to her after the first few months. The strange echo : he was like a living echo ! His very flesh, when you touched it, did not seem quite the flesh of a real man.

Perhaps it was that he was a little bit mad. She thought it definitely the night her baby was born.

" Ah, so my little princess has come at last ! " he said, in his throaty, singing Celtic voice, like a glad chant, swaying absorbed.

It was a tiny, frail baby, with wide, amazed blue eyes. They christened it Mary Henrietta. She called the little thing *My Dollie*. He called it always *My Princess*.

It was useless to fly at him. He just opened his wide blue eyes wider, and took a childlike, silent dignity there was no getting past.

Hannah Prescott had never been robust. She had no great desire to live. So when the baby was two years old she suddenly died.

The Prescotts felt a deep but unadmitted resentment against Colin Urquhart. They said he was selfish. Therefore they discontinued Hannah's income a month after her burial in Florence, after they had urged the father to give the child over to them, and he had courteously, musically, but quite finally refused. He treated the Prescotts as if they were not

of his world, not realities to him : just casual phenomena, or gramophones, talking-machines that had to be answered. He answered them. But of their actual existence he was never once aware.

They debated having him certified unsuitable to be guardian of his own child. But that would have created a scandal. So they did the simplest thing, after all—washed their hands of him. But they wrote scrupulously to the child, and sent her modest presents of money at Christmas, and on the anniversary of the death of her mother.

To The Princess her Boston relatives were for many years just a nominal reality. She lived with her father, and he travelled continually, though in a modest way, living on his moderate income. And never going to America. The child changed nurses all the time. In Italy it was a *contadina* ; in India she had an *ayah* ; in Germany she had a yellow-haired peasant girl.

Father and child were inseparable. He was not a recluse. Wherever he went he was to be seen paying formal calls, going out to luncheon or to tea, rarely to dinner. And always with the child. People called her Princess Urquhart, as if that were her christened name.

She was a quick, dainty little thing with dark gold hair that went a soft brown, and wide, slightly prominent blue eyes that were at once so candid and so knowing. She was always grown up ; she never really grew up. Always strangely wise, and always childish.

It was her father's fault.

"My little Princess must never take too much notice of people and the things they say and do," he repeated to her. "People don't know what they are doing and saying. They chatter-chatter, and they hurt one another, and they hurt themselves very often, till they cry. But don't take any notice, my little Princess. Because it is all nothing. Inside everybody there is another creature, a demon which doesn't care at all. You peel away all the things they say and do and feel, as cook peels away the outside of the onions. And in the middle of everybody there is a green demon which you can't peel away. And this green demon never changes, and it doesn't care at all about all the things that happen to the outside leaves of the person,

all the chatter-chatter, and all the husbands and wives and children, and troubles and fusses. You peel everything away from people, and there is a green, upright demon in every man and woman ; and this demon is a man's real self, and a woman's real self. It doesn't really care about anybody, it belongs to the demons and the primitive fairies, who never care. But, even so, there are big demons and mean demons, and splendid demonish fairies, and vulgar ones. But there are no royal fairy women left. Only you, my little Princess. You are the last of the royal race of the old people ; the last, my Princess. There are no others. You and I are the last. When I am dead there will be only you. And that is why, darling, you will never care for any of the people in the world very much. Because their demons are all dwindled and vulgar. They are not royal. Only you are royal, after me. Always remember that. And always remember, it is a *great secret*. If you tell people, they will try to kill you, because they will envy you for being a Princess. It is our great secret, darling. I am a prince, and you a princess, of the old, old blood. And we keep our secret between us, all alone. And so, darling, you must treat all people very politely, because *noblesse oblige*. But you must never forget that you alone are the last of Princesses, and that all others are less than you are, less noble, more vulgar. Treat them politely and gently and kindly, darling. But you are the Princess, and they are commoners. Never try to think of them as if they were like you. They are not. You will find, always, that they are lacking, lacking in the royal touch, which only you have—."

The Princess learned her lesson early—the first lesson, of absolute reticence, the impossibility of intimacy with any other than her father ; the second lesson, of naïve, slightly benevolent politeness. As a small child, something crystallised in her character, making her clear and finished, and as impervious as crystal.

"Dear child !" her hostesses said of her. "She is so quaint and old-fashioned ; such a lady, poor little mite !"

She was erect, and very dainty. Always small, nearly tiny in physique, she seemed like a changeling beside her big, handsome, slightly mad father. She dressed very simply, usually in blues or delicate greys, with little collars of old Milan

point, or very finely-worked linen. She had exquisite little hands, that made the piano sound like a spinet when she played. She was rather given to wearing cloaks and capes, instead of coats, out of doors, and little eighteenth-century sort of hats. Her complexion was pure apple-blossom.

She looked as if she had stepped out of a picture. But no-one, to her dying day, ever knew exactly the strange picture her father had framed her in, and from which she never stepped.

Her grandfather and grandmother and her Aunt Maud demanded twice to see her, once in Rome and once in Paris. Each time they were charmed, piqued, and annoyed. She was so exquisite and such a little virgin. At the same time so knowing and so oddly assured. That odd, assured touch of condescension, and the inward coldness, infuriated her American relations.

Only she really fascinated her grandfather. He was spell-bound ; in a way, in love with the little faultless thing. His wife would catch him brooding, musing over his grandchild, long months after the meeting, and craving to see her again. He cherished to the end the fond hope that she might come to live with him and her grandmother.

"Thank you so much, grandfather. You are so very kind. But Papa and I are such an old couple, you see, such a crochety old couple, living in a world of our own."

Her father let her see the world—from the outside. And he let her read. When she was in her teens she read Zola and Maupassant, and with the eyes of Zola and Maupassant she looked on Paris. A little later she read Tolstoi and Dostoevsky. The latter confused her. The others, she seemed to understand with a very shrewd, canny understanding, just as she understood the Decameron stories as she read them in their old Italian, or the Nibelung poems. Strange and *uncanny*, she seemed to understand things in a cold light perfectly, with all the flush of fire absent. She was something like a changeling, not quite human.

This earned her, also, strange antipathies. Cabmen and railway-porters, especially in Paris or Rome, would suddenly treat her with brutal rudeness, when she was alone. They seemed to look on her with sudden violent antipathy. They sensed in her curious impertinence, an easy, sterile impertinence

towards the things *they* felt most. She was so assured, and her flower of maidenhood was so scentless. She could look at a lusty, sensual Roman cabman as if he were a sort of grotesque, to make her smile. She knew all about him, in Zola. And the peculiar condescension with which she would give him her order, as if she, frail, beautiful thing, were the only reality, and he, coarse monster, were a sort of Caliban floundering in the mud on the margin of the pool of the perfect lotus, would suddenly enrage the fellow, the real Mediterranean who prided himself on his *beauté mâle*, and to whom the phallic mystery was still the only mystery. And he would turn a terrible face on her, bully her in a brutal, coarse fashion—hideous. For to him she had only the blasphemous impertinence of her own sterility.

Encounters like these made her tremble, and made her know she must have support from the outside. The power of her spirit did not extend to these low people, and they had all the physical power. She realised an implacability of hatred in their turning on her. But she did not lose her head. She quietly paid out money and turned away.

Those were dangerous moments, though, and she learned to be prepared for them. The Princess she was, and the fairy from the North, she could never understand the volcanic phallic rage with which coarse people could turn on her in a paroxysm of hatred. They never turned on her father like that. And quite early she decided it was the New England mother in her whom they hated. Never for one minute could she see with the old Roman eyes, see herself as sterility, the barren flower taking on airs and an intolerable impertinence. This was what the Roman cabman saw in her. And he longed to crush the barren blossom. Its sexless beauty and its authority put him in a passion of brutal revolt.

When she was nineteen her grandfather died, leaving her a considerable fortune in the safe hands of responsible trustees. They would deliver her her income, but only on condition that she resided for six months in the year in the United States.

"Why should they make me conditions?" she said to her father. "I refuse to be imprisoned six months in the year in the United States. We will tell them to keep their money."

"Let us be wise, my little Princess, let us be wise. No, we are almost poor, and we are never safe from rudeness. I cannot allow anybody to be rude to me. I hate it, I hate it!" His eyes flamed as he said it. "I could kill any man or woman who is rude to me. But we are in exile in the world. We are powerless. If we were really poor, we should be quite powerless, and then I should die. No, my Princess. Let us take their money, then they will not dare to be rude to us. Let us take it, as we put on clothes, to cover ourselves from their aggressions."

There began a new phase, when the father and daughter spent their summers on the Great Lakes, or in California, or in the South-West. The father was something of a poet, the daughter something of a painter. He wrote poems about the lakes or the red-wood trees, and she made dainty drawings. He was physically a strong man, and he loved the out-of-doors. He would go off with her for days, paddling in a canoe and sleeping by a camp-fire. Frail little Princess, she was always undaunted; always undaunted. She would ride with him on horseback over the mountain trails till she was so tired she was nothing but a bodiless consciousness sitting astride her pony. But she never gave in. And at night he folded her in her blankets on a bed of balsam-pine twigs, and she lay and looked at the stars unmurmuring. She was fulfilling her rôle.

People said to her as the years passed, and she was a woman of twenty-five, then a woman of thirty, and always the same virgin dainty Princess, "knowing" in a dispassionate way, like an old woman, and utterly intact:

"Don't you ever think what you will do when your father is no longer with you?"

She looked at her interlocutor with that cold, elfin detachment of hers:

"No, I never think of it," she said.

She had a tiny, but exquisite little house in London, and another small, perfect house in Connecticut, each with a faithful housekeeper. Two homes, if she chose. And she knew many interesting literary and artistic people. What more?

So the years passed imperceptibly. And she had that quality of the sexless fairies, she did not change. At thirty-three she looked twenty-three.

Her father, however, was ageing, and becoming more and more queer. It was now her task to be his guardian in his private madness. He spent the last three years of life in the house in Connecticut. He was very much estranged, sometimes had fits of violence which almost killed the little Princess. Physical violence was horrible to her; it seemed to shatter her heart. But she found a woman a few years younger than herself, well educated and sensitive, to be a sort of nurse-companion to the mad old man. So the fact of madness was never openly admitted. Miss Cummins, the companion, had a passionate loyalty to the Princess, and a curious affection, tinged with love, for the handsome, white-haired, courteous old man, who was never at all aware of his fits of violence once they had passed.

The Princess was thirty-eight years old when her father died. And quite unchanged. She was still tiny, and like a dignified, scentless flower. Her soft brownish hair, almost the colour of beaver fur, was bobbed, and fluffed softly round her apple-blossom face, that was modelled with an arched nose like a proud old Florentine portrait. In her voice, manner and bearing she was exceedingly still, like a flower that has blossomed in a shadowy place. And from her blue eyes looked out the Princess's eternal laconic challenge, that grew almost sardonic as the years passed. She was the Princess, and sardonically she looked out on a princeless world.

She was relieved when her father died, and at the same time, it was as if everything had evaporated around her. She had lived in a sort of hot-house, in the aura of her father's madness. Suddenly the hot-house had been removed from around her, and she was in the raw, vast, vulgar open air.

Quoi faire ? What was she to do ? She seemed faced with absolute nothingness. Only she had Miss Cummins, who shared with her the secret, and almost the passion for her father. In fact the Princess felt that her passion for her mad father had in some curious way transferred itself largely to Charlotte Cummins during the last years. And now Miss Cummins was the vessel that held the passion for the dead man. She herself, the Princess, was an empty vessel.

An empty vessel in the enormous warehouse of the world.

THE PRINCESS

Quoi faire ? What was she to do ? She felt that, since she could not evaporate into nothingness, like alcohol from an unstoppered bottle, she must *do* something. Never before in her life had she felt the incumbency. Never, never had she felt she must *do* anything. That was left to the vulgar.

Now her father was dead, she found herself on the *fringe* of the vulgar crowd, sharing their necessity to *do* something. It was a little humiliating. She felt herself becoming vulgarised. At the same time she found herself looking at men with a shrewder eye : an eye to marriage. Not that she felt any sudden interest in men, or attraction towards them. No. She was still neither interested nor attracted towards men vitally. But *marriage*, that peculiar abstraction, had imposed a sort of spell on her. She thought that *marriage*, in the blank abstract, was the thing she ought to *do*. That *marriage* implied a man she also knew. She knew all the facts. But the man seemed a property of her own mind rather than a thing in himself, another being.

Her father died in the summer, the month after her thirty-eighth birthday. When all was over, the obvious thing to do, of course, was to travel. With Miss Cummins. The two women knew each other intimately, but they were always Miss Urquhart and Miss Cummins to one another, and a certain distance was instinctively maintained. Miss Cummins, from Philadelphia, of scholastic stock, and intelligent but untravelled, four years younger than the Princess, felt herself immensely the junior of her "lady." She had a sort of passionate veneration for the Princess, who seemed to her ageless, timeless. She could not see the rows of tiny, dainty, exquisite shoes in the Princess's cupboard without feeling a stab at the heart, a stab of tenderness and reverence, almost of awe.

Miss Cummins also was virginal, but with a look of puzzled surprise in her brown eyes. Her skin was pale and clear, her features well modelled, but there was a certain blankness in her expression, where the Princess had an odd touch of Renaissance grandeur. Miss Cummins' voice was also hushed almost to a whisper ; it was the inevitable effect of Colin Urquhart's room. But the hushedness had a hoarse quality

The Princess did not want to go to Europe. Her face seemed turned west. Now her father was gone, she felt she would go west, westwards, as if for ever. Following, no doubt, the March of Empire, which is brought up rather short on the Pacific coast, among swarms of wallowing bathers.

No, not the Pacific coast. She would stop short of that. The South-West was less vulgar. She would go to New Mexico.

She and Miss Cummins arrived at the Rancho del Cerro Gordo towards the end of August, when the crowd was beginning to drift back east. The ranch lay by a stream on the desert some four miles from the foot of the mountains, a mile away from the Indian *pueblo* of San Cristobal. It was a ranch for the rich; the Princess paid thirty dollars a day for herself and Miss Cummins. But then she had a little cottage to herself, among the apple-trees of the orchard, with an excellent cook. She and Miss Cummins, however, took dinner at evening in the large guest-house. For the Princess still entertained the idea of *marriage*.

The guests at the Rancho del Cerro Gordo were of all sorts, except the poor sort. They were practically all rich, and many were romantic. Some were charming, others were vulgar, some were movie people, quite quaint and not unattractive in their vulgarity, and many were Jews. The Princess did not care for Jews, though they were usually the most interesting to *talk* to. So she talked a good deal with the Jews, and painted with the artists, and rode with the young men from College, and had altogether quite a good time. And yet she felt something of a fish out of water, or a bird in the wrong forest. And *marriage* remained still completely in the abstract. No connecting it with any of these young men, even the nice ones.

The Princess looked just twenty-five. The freshness of her mouth, the hushed, delicate-complexioned virginity of her face gave her not a day more. Only a certain laconic look in her eyes was disconcerting. When she was *forced* to write her age, she put twenty-eight, making the figure two rather badly, so that it just avoided being a three.

Men hinted marriage at her. Especially boys from college suggested it from a distance. But they all failed before the

THE PRINCESS

look of sardonic ridicule in the Princess's eyes. It always seemed to her rather preposterous, quite ridiculous, and a tiny bit impertinent on their part.

The only man that intrigued her at all was one of the guides, a man called Romero—Domingo Romero. It was he who had sold the ranch itself to the Wilkiesons, ten years before, for two thousand dollars. He had gone away, then reappeared at the old place. For he was the son of the old Romero, the last of the Spanish family that had owned miles of land around San Cristobal. But the coming of the white man and the failure of the vast flocks of sheep, and the fatal inertia which overcomes all men, at last, on the desert near the mountains, had finished the Romero family. The last descendants were just Mexican peasants.

Domingo, the heir, had spent his two thousand dollars, and was working for white people. He was now about thirty years old, a tall, silent fellow, with a heavy closed mouth and black eyes that looked across at one almost sullenly. From behind he was handsome, with a strong, natural body, and the back of his neck very dark and well-shapen, strong with life. But his dark face was long and heavy, almost sinister, with that peculiar heavy meaninglessness in it, characteristic of the Mexicans of his own locality. They are strong, they seem healthy. They laugh and joke with one another. But their physique and their natures seem static, as if there were nowhere, nowhere at all for their energies to go, and their faces, degenerating to misshapen heaviness, seem to have no *raison d'être*, no radical meaning. Waiting either to die or to be aroused into passion and hope. In some of the black eyes a queer, haunting mystic quality, sombre and a bit gruesome, the skull-and-crossbones look of the Penitentes. They had found their *raison d'être* in self-torture and death-worship. Unable to wrest a *positive* significance for themselves from the vast, beautiful, but vindictive landscape they were born into, they turned on their own selves, and worshipped death through self-torture. The mystic gloom of this showed in their eyes.

But as a rule the dark eyes of the Mexicans were heavy and half-alive, sometimes hostile, sometimes kindly, often with the fatal Indian glaze on them, or the fatal Indian glint.

Domingo Romero was *almost* a typical Mexican to look at, with the typical heavy, dark, long face, clean-shaven, with an almost brutally heavy mouth. His eyes were black and Indian-looking. Only, at the centre of their hopelessness was a spark of pride, of self-confidence, of dauntlessness. Just a spark in the midst of the blackness of static despair.

But this spark was the difference between him and the mass of men. It gave a certain alert sensitiveness to his bearing and a certain beauty to his appearance. He wore a low-crowned black hat, instead of the ponderous head-gear of the usual Mexican, and his clothes were thinnish and graceful. Silent, aloof, almost imperceptible in the landscape, he was an admirable guide, with a startling quick intelligence that anticipated difficulties about to arise. He could cook, too, crouching over the camp-fire and moving his lean, deft brown hands. The only fault he had was that he was not forthcoming, he wasn't chatty and cosy.

"Oh, don't send Romero with us," the Jews would say. "One can't get any response from him."

Tourists come and go, but they rarely *see* anything, inwardly. None of them ever saw the spark at the middle of Romero's eye, they were not alive enough to see it.

The Princess caught it one day, when she had him for a guide. She was fishing for trout in the canyon, Miss Cummins was reading a book, the horses were tied under the trees, Romero was fixing a proper fly on her line. He fixed the fly and handed her the line, looking up at her. And at that moment she caught the spark in his eye. And instantly she knew that he was a gentleman, that his "demon," as her father would have said, was a fine demon. And instantly her manner towards him changed.

He had perched her on a rock over a quiet pool, beyond the cotton-wood trees. It was early September, and the canyon already cool, but the leaves of the cotton-woods were still green. The Princess stood on her rock, a small but perfectly-formed figure, wearing a soft, close grey sweater and neatly-cut grey riding breeches, with tall black boots, her fluffy brown hair straggling from under a little grey felt hat. A woman? Not quite. A changeling of some sort, perched in outline there on the rock, in the bristling wild canyon. She knew

perfectly well how to handle a line. Her father had made a fisherman of her.

Romero, in a black shirt and with loose black trousers pushed into wide black riding boots, was fishing a little further down. He had put his hat on a rock behind him; his dark head was bent a little forward, watching the water. He had caught three trout. From time to time he glanced upstream at the Princess, perched there so daintily. He saw she had caught nothing.

Soon he quietly drew in his line and came up to her. His keen eye watched her line, watched her position. Then, quietly, he suggested certain changes to her, putting his sensitive brown hand before her. And he withdrew a little, and stood in silence, leaning against a tree, watching her. He was helping her across the distance. She knew it, and thrilled. And in a moment she had a bite. In two minutes she had landed a good trout. She looked round at him quickly, her eyes sparkling, the colour heightened in her cheeks. And as she met his eyes a smile of greeting went over his dark face, very sudden, with an odd sweetness.

She knew he was helping her. And she felt in his presence a subtle, insidious male *kindliness* she had never known before, waiting upon her. Her cheek flushed, and her blue eyes darkened.

After this, she always looked for him, and for that curious dark beam of a man's *kindliness* which he could give her, as it were, from his chest, from his heart. It was something she had never known before.

A vague, unspoken intimacy grew up between them. She liked his voice, his appearance, his presence. His natural language was Spanish; he spoke English like a foreign language, rather slow, with a slight hesitation, but with a sad, plangent sonority lingering over from his Spanish. There was a certain subtle correctness in his appearance; he was always perfectly shaved; his hair was thick and rather long on top, but always carefully groomed behind. And his fine black cashmere shirt, his wide leather belt, his well-cut, wide black trousers going into the embroidered cowboy boots had a certain inextinguishable elegance. He wore no silver rings or buckles. Only his boots were embroidered and decorated at the top with an

inlay of white *suède*. He seemed elegant, slender, yet he was very strong.

And at the same time, curiously, he gave her the feeling that death was not far from him. Perhaps he too was half in love with death. However that may be, the sense she had that death was not far from him made him "possible" to her.

Small as she was, she was quite a good horsewoman. They gave her at the ranch a sorrel mare, very lovely in colour, and well-made, with a powerful broad neck and the hollow back that betokens a swift runner. Tansy, she was called. Her only fault was the usual mare's failing, she was inclined to be hysterical.

So that every day the Princess set off with Miss Cummins and Romero, on horseback, riding into the mountains. Once they went camping for several days, with two more friends in the party.

"I think I like it better," the Princess said to Romero, "when we three go alone."

And he gave her one of his quick, transfiguring smiles.

It was curious no white man had ever showed her this capacity for subtle gentleness, this power to *help* her in silence across a distance, if she were fishing without success, or tired of her horse, or if Tansy suddenly got scared. It was as if Romero could send her *from his heart* a dark beam of succour and sustaining. She had never known this before, and it was very thrilling.

Then the smile that suddenly creased his dark face, showing the strong white teeth. It creased his face almost into a savage grotesque. And at the same time there was in it something so warm, such a dark flame of kindness for her, she was elated into her true Princess self.

Then that vivid, latent spark in his eye, which she had seen, and which she knew he was aware she had seen. It made an inter-recognition between them, silent and delicate. Here he was delicate as a woman in this subtle inter-recognition.

And yet his presence only put to flight in her her *idée fixe* of "marriage." For some reason, in her strange little brain, the idea of *marrying* him could not enter. Not for any definite reason. He was in himself a gentleman, and she had plenty

of money for two. There was no actual obstacle. Nor was she conventional.

No, now she came down to it, it was as if their two "demons" could marry, were perhaps married. Only their two *selves*, Miss Urquhart and Señor Domingo Romero, were for some reason incompatible. There was a peculiar subtle intimacy of inter-recognition between them. But she did not see in the least how it would lead to marriage. Almost she could more easily marry one of the nice boys from Harvard or Yale.

The time passed, and she let it pass. The end of September came, with aspens going yellow on the mountain heights, and oak-scrub going red. But as yet the cotton-woods in the valley and canyons had not changed.

"When will you go away?" Romero asked her, looking at her fixedly, with a blank black eye.

"By the end of October," she said. "I have promised to be in Santa Barbara at the beginning of November."

He was hiding the spark in his eye from her. But she saw the peculiar sullen thickening of his heavy mouth.

She had complained to him many times that one never saw any wild animals, except chipmunks and squirrels, and perhaps a skunk and a porcupine. Never a deer, or a bear, or a mountain lion.

"Are there no bigger animals in these mountains?" she asked, dissatisfied.

"Yes," he said. "There are deer—I see their tracks. And I saw the tracks of a bear."

"But why can one never see the animals themselves?" She looked dissatisfied and wistful like a child.

"Why, it's pretty hard for you to see them. They won't let you come close. You have to keep still, in a place where they come. Or else you have to follow their tracks a long way."

"I can't bear to go away till I've seen them: a bear, or a deer—"

The smile came suddenly on his face, indulgent.

"Well, what do you want? Do you want to go up into the mountains to some place, to wait till they come?"

"Yes," she said, looking up at him with a sudden naïve impulse of recklessness.

And immediately his face became sombre again, responsible.

"Well," he said, with slight irony, a touch of mockery of her. "You will have to find a house. It's very cold at night now. You would have to stay all night in a house."

"And there are no houses up there?" she said.

"Yes," he replied. "There is a little shack that belongs to me, that a miner built a long time ago, looking for gold. You can go there and stay one night, and maybe you see something. Maybe! I don't know. Maybe nothing come."

"How much chance is there?"

"Well, I don't know. Last time when I was there I see three deer come down to drink at the water, and I shot two raccoons. But maybe this time we don't see anything."

"Is there water there?" she asked.

"Yes, there is a little round pond, you know, below the spruce trees. And the water from the snow runs into it."

"Is it far away?" she asked.

"Yes, pretty far. You see that ridge there"—and turning to the mountains he lifted his arm in the gesture which is somehow so moving, out in the West, pointing to the distance—"that ridge where there are no trees, only rock"—his black eyes were focussed on the distance, his face impassive, but as if in pain—"you go round that ridge, and along, then you come down through the spruce trees to where that cabin is. My father he bought that place, claim from a miner who was broke, but nobody ever found any gold or anything, and nobody ever goes there. Too lonesome!"

The Princess watched the massive, heavy-sitting, beautiful bulk of the Rocky Mountains. It was early in October, and the aspens were already losing their gold leaves; high up, the spruce and pine seemed to be growing darker; the great flat patches of oak-scrub on the heights were red like gore.

"Can I go over there?" she asked, turning to him and meeting the spark in his eye.

His face was heavy with responsibility.

"Yes," he said, "you can go. But there'll be snow over the ridge, and it's awful cold, and awful lonesome."

"I should like to go," she said, persistent.

"All right," he said. "You can go if you want to."

She doubted, though, if the Wilkiesons would let her go ; at least alone with Romero and Miss Cummins.

Yet an obstinacy characteristic of her nature, an obstinacy tinged perhaps with madness, had taken hold of her. She wanted to look over the mountains into their secret heart. She wanted to descend to the cabin below the spruce trees, near the tarn of bright green water. She wanted to see the wild animals move about in their wild unconsciousness.

"Let us say to the Wilkiesons that we want to make the trip round the Frijoles canyon," she said.

The trip round the Frijoles canyon was a usual thing. It would not be strenuous, nor cold, nor lonely : they could sleep in the log house that was called an hotel.

Romero looked at her quickly.

"If you want to say that," he replied, "you can tell Mrs. Wilkieson. Only I know she'll be mad with me if I take you up in the mountains to that place. And I've got to go there first with a pack-horse, to take lots of blankets and some bread. Maybe Miss Cummins can't stand it. Maybe not. It's a hard trip."

He was speaking, and thinking, in the heavy, disconnected Mexican fashion.

"Never mind !" The Princess was suddenly very decisive and stiff with authority. "I want to do it. I will arrange with Mrs. Wilkieson. And we'll go on Saturday."

He shook his head slowly.

"I've got to go up on Sunday with a pack-horse and blankets," he said. "Can't do it before."

"Very well !" she said, rather piqued. "Then we'll start on Monday."

She hated being thwarted even the tiniest bit.

He knew that if he started with the pack on Sunday at dawn he would not be back until late at night. But he consented that they should start on Monday morning at seven. The obedient Miss Cummins was told to prepare for the Frijoles trip. On Sunday Romero had his day off. He had not put in an appearance when the Princess retired on Sunday night, but on Monday morning, as she was dressing, she saw him bringing in the three horses from the corral. She was in high spirits.

The night had been cold. There was ice at the edges of the irrigation ditch, and the chipmunks crawled into the sun and lay with wide, dumb, anxious eyes, almost too numb to run.

"We may be away two or three days," said the Princess.

"Very well. We won't begin to be anxious about you before Thursday, then," said Mrs. Wilkieson, who was young and capable : from Chicago. "Anyway," she added, "Romero will see you through. He's so trustworthy."

The sun was already on the desert as they set off towards the mountains, making the greasewood and the sage pale as pale-grey sands, luminous the great level around them. To the right glinted the shadows of the adobe *pueblo*, flat and almost invisible on the plain, earth of its earth. Behind lay the ranch and the tufts of tall, plummy cottonwoods, whose summits were yellowing under the perfect blue sky.

Autumn breaking into colour in the great spaces of the South-West.

But the three trotted gently along the trail, towards the sun that sparkled yellow just above the dark bulk of the ponderous mountains. Sideslopes were already gleaming yellow, flaming with a second light, under the coldish blue of the pale sky. The front slopes were in shadow, with submerged lustre of red oak-scrub and dull-gold aspens, blue-black pines and grey-blue rock. While the canyon was full of a deep blueness.

They rode single file, Romero first, on a black horse. Himself in black, he made a flickering black spot in the delicate pallor of the great landscape, where even pine-trees at a distance take a film of blue paler than their green. Romero rode on in silence past the tufts of furry greasewood. The Princess came next, on her sorrel mare. And Miss Cummins, who was not quite happy on horseback, came last, in the pale dust that the others kicked up. Sometimes her horse sneezed, and she started.

But on they went, at a gentle trot. Romero never looked round. He could hear the sound of the hoofs following, and that was all he wanted.

For the rest, he held ahead. And the Princess, with that black, unheeding figure always travelling away from her, felt strangely helpless, withal elated.

THE PRINCESS

They neared the pale, round foot-hills, dotted with the round dark piñon and cedar shrubs. The horses clinked and clattered among stones. Occasionally a big round greasewood held out fleecy tufts of flowers, pure gold. They wound into blue shadow, then up a steep stony slope, with the world lying pallid away behind and below. Then they dropped into the shadow of the San Cristobal canyon.

The stream was running full and swift. Occasionally the horses snatched at a tuft of grass. The trail narrowed and became rocky, the rocks closed in, it was dark and cool as the horses climbed and climbed upwards, and the tree-trunks crowded in in the shadowy, silent tightness of the canyon. They were among cottonwood trees that ran up straight and smooth and round to an extraordinary height. Above, the tips were gold, and it was sun. But away below, where the horses struggled up the rocks and wound among the trunks, there was still blue shadow by the sound of waters, and an occasional grey festoon of old-man's-beard, and here and there a pale, dipping cranesbill flower among the tangle and the debris of the virgin place. And again the chill entered the Princess's heart as she realised what a tangle of decay and despair lay in the virgin forests.

They scrambled downwards, splashed across stream, up rocks and along the trail on the other side. Romero's black horse stopped, looked down quizzically at the fallen trees, then stepped over lightly. The Princess's sorrel followed, carefully, But Miss Cummins's buckskin made a fuss, and had to be got round.

In the same silence, save for the clinking of the horses and the splashing as the trail crossed stream, they worked their way upwards in the tight, tangled shadow of the canyon. Sometimes, crossing stream, the Princess would glance upwards, and then always her heart caught in her breast. For high up, away in heaven, the mountain heights shone yellow, dappled with dark spruce firs, clear almost as speckled daffodils against the pale turquoise blue lying high and serene above the dark-blue shadow where the Princess was. And she would snatch at the blood-red leaves of the oak as her horse crossed a more open slope, not knowing what she felt.

They were getting fairly high, occasionally lifted above the canyon itself, in the low groove below the speckled, gold-

sparkling heights which towered beyond. Then again they dipped and crossed stream, the horses stepping gingerly across a tangle of fallen, frail aspen stems, then suddenly floundering in a mass of rocks. The black emerged ahead, his black tail waving. The Princess let her mare find her own footing ; then she too emerged from the clatter. She rode on after the black. Then came a great frantic rattle of the buckskin behind. The Princess was aware of Romero's dark face looking round, with a strange, demon-like watchfulness, before she herself looked round, to see the buckskin scrambling rather lamely beyond the rocks, with one of his pale buff knees already red with blood.

"He almost went down !" called Miss Cummins.

But Romero was already out of the saddle and hastening down the path. He made quiet little noises to the buckskin, and began examining the cut knee.

"Is he hurt ?" cried Miss Cummins anxiously, and she climbed hastily down.

"Oh, my goodness !" she cried, as she saw the blood running down the slender buff leg of the horse in a thin trickle. "Isn't that *awful* ?" She spoke in a stricken voice, and her face was white.

Romero was still carefully feeling the knee of the buckskin. Then he made him walk a few paces. And at last he stood up straight and shook his head.

"Not very bad !" he said. "Nothing broken."

Again he bent and worked at the knee. Then he looked up at the Princess.

"He can go on," he said. "It's not bad."

The Princess looked down at the dark face in silence.

"What, go on right up here ?" cried Miss Cummins. "How many hours ?"

"About five," said Romero simply.

"Five hours !" cried Miss Cummins. "A horse with a lame knee ! And a steep mountain ! Why-y !"

"Yes, it's pretty steep up there," said Romero, pushing back his hat and staring fixedly at the bleeding knee. The buckskin stood in a stricken sort of dejection. "But I think he'll make it all right," the man added.

"Oh!" cried Miss Cummins, her eyes bright with sudden passion of unshed tears. "I wouldn't think of it. I wouldn't ride him up there, not for any money."

"Why wouldn't you?" asked Romero.

"It *hurts* him."

Romero bent down again to the horse's knee.

"Maybe it hurts him a little," he said. "But he can make it all right, and his leg won't get stiff."

"What! Ride him five hours up the steep mountains?" cried Miss Cummins. "I couldn't. I just couldn't do it. I'll lead him a little way and see if he can go. But I *couldn't* ride him again. I couldn't. Let me walk."

"But Miss Cummins, dear, if Romero says he'll be all right?" said the Princess.

"I know it hurts him. Oh, I just couldn't bear it."

There was no doing anything with Miss Cummins. The thought of a hurt animal always put her into a sort of hysterics.

They walked forward a little, leading the buckskin. He limped rather badly. Miss Cummins sat on a rock.

"Why, it's agony to see him!" she cried. "It's *cruel*!"

"He won't limp after a bit, if you take no notice of him," said Romero. "Now he plays up, and limps very much, because he wants to make you see."

"I don't think there can be much playing up," said Miss Cummins bitterly. "We can *see* how it must hurt him."

"It don't hurt much," said Romero.

But now Miss Cummins was silent with antipathy.

It was a deadlock. The party remained motionless on the trail, the Princess in the saddle, Miss Cummins seated on a rock, Romero standing black and remote near the drooping buckskin.

"Well!" said the man suddenly at last. "I guess we go back, then."

And he looked up swiftly at his horse, which was cropping at the mountain herbage and treading on the trailing reins.

"No!" cried the Princess. "Oh no!" Her voice rang with a great wail of disappointment and anger. Then she checked herself.

Miss Cummins rose with energy.

"Let me lead the buckskin home," she said, with cold dignity, "and you two go on."

This was received in silence. The Princess was looking down at her with a sardonic, almost cruel gaze.

"We've only come about two hours," said Miss Cummins. "I don't mind a bit leading him home. But I *couldn't* ride him. I *couldn't* have him ridden with that knee."

This again was received in dead silence. Romero remained impassive, almost inert.

"Very well, then," said the Princess. "You lead him home. You'll be quite all right. Nothing can happen to you, possibly. And say to them that we have gone on and shall be home to-morrow—or the day after."

She spoke coldly and distinctly. For she could not bear to be thwarted.

"Better all go back, and come again another day," said Romero—non-committal.

"There will never *be* another day," cried the Princess. "I want to go on."

She looked him square in the eyes, and met the spark in his eye.

He raised his shoulders slightly.

"If you want it," he said. "I'll go on with you. But Miss Cummins can ride my horse to the end of the canyon, and I lead the buckskin. Then I come back to you."

It was arranged so. Miss Cummins had her saddle put on Romero's black horse, Romero took the buckskin's bridle, and they started back. The Princess rode very slowly on, upwards, alone. She was at first so angry with Miss Cummins that she was blind to everything else. She just let her mare follow her own inclinations.

(To be continued next month.)

Poems

By ROBERT GRAVES.

The Clipped Stater.

He, Alexander, had been deified
By loud applause of the Macedonian phalanx,
By sullen groans of the wide worlds he had vanquished.
Who but a God could have so hacked down their pride ?

He would not take a Goddess to his Throne
In the elder style, remembering those disasters
That Juno's jealous eye brought on her Consort.
Thäis was fair ; but he must hold his own.

Nor would he rank himself a common god
In fellowship with those of Ind or Egypt
Whom he had shamed : even to Jove his father
Paid scant respect (as Jove stole Saturn's Nod).

Now meditates " No land of all known lands
Has offered me resistance, none denies me
Infinite power, infinite thought and knowledge :
What now awaits the assurance of my hands ? "

He weeps : the occasion, documented well,
Begins my now for the first time recorded
And philosophic tale of *The Clipped Stater*
(Though how it came to me, I must not tell).

Alexander in a fever of mind
Reasons " Omnipotence by its very nature
Is infinite possibility and purpose,
Which must embrace, *that it can be confined.* "

Then Finity is true Godhead's final test,
Nor does it shear the grandeur from Free Being ;
" I must fulfil my self by self-destruction. "
The curious phrase renews his conquering zest.

THE CALENDAR

He assumes man's flesh. Djinn catch him up and fly
To a land of yellow men beyond his knowledge,
And that he does not know them, he takes gladly
For surest proof he has put his Godhead by.

In Macedonia shortly it is said
"Alexander, our God, has died of a fever :
Demi-gods parcel out his huge dominions."
So Alexander, as God, is duly dead.

But Alexander the Man, whom yellow folk
Find roving naked, armed with a naked cutlass,
Has Death, which is the strangers' fate, excused him.
Joyfully he submits to the alien yoke,

He is enlisted for the frontier guard
With gaol-rogues and the press-gang's easy captures ;
Where captains who have felt the Crown's displeasure
But have thought suicide too direct and hard,

Teach him a new tongue and the soldier's trade
To which the trade *he* taught has little likeness,
So that he glories in his limitations :
At every turn his hands and feet are stayed.

"Who was your father, friend ?" He answers "Jove,"
"His father ?" "Saturn." "And *his* father ?" "Chaos."
"And *his* ?" Thus Alexander loses honour
Ten fathers is the least that a man should prove.

Stripes and bastinadoes, famine and thirst,
All these he suffers, never in resolution
Wavering, nor in his heart enquiring whether
God can be by his own confines accursed.

And he grows grey and eats his frugal rice ;
Endures his watch on the fort's icy ramparts,
Staring across the uncouth wildernesses,
And cleans his leather and steel ; and shakes the dice.

He will not dream Olympically, nor stir
To enlarge himself with comforts or promotion,
Nor evade punishment when, sour of temper,
He has pulled the corporal's nose and called him "cur."

POEMS

His comrades mutinously demand their pay.
"We have had none since the Emperor's Coronation.
At one gold piece a year there are fifteen owing.
One-third that sum would bribe us free," say they.

The pay-sack came at length, when hope was cold,
But much reduced in bulk since the first issue
By the Royal Treasurer ; and he, be certain,
Kept back a half of the silver and all the gold.

Every official hand had dipped in the sack
And the frontier captains, themselves disappointed
Of long arrears took every doit remaining,
But from good feelings put a trifle back.

Telling their men "since no pay has come through
We will advance from our too lavish purses
To every man of the guard, a piece of silver.
Let it be repaid when you have your overdue."

The soldiers grumbling but much satisfied
By thoughts of a drink and a drab, accept the favour,
And Alexander advancing to the pay-desk
Salutes and takes his earnings with no pride.

The coin is bored, to string with the country's bronze
On a cord, one side is scraped to glassy smoothness
And the Head, clipped of its hair and neck, bears witness
That it had a broad, more generous mintage once.

And Alexander gazing at it then
Knows it well for a Silver Alexander
Coined from the bullion taken at Arbela.
How is it current among these slant-eyed men ?

He stands in a troubled reverie of doubt
Till a whip stings his shoulders and a voice bellows
"Are you dissatisfied, you scum of the ditches ?"
So he salutes again and turns about.

But he cannot fathom what the event may mean.
Was his lost Empire, then, not all-embracing ?
And how does the stater, though defaced, owe service
To a God that is as if he had never been ?

THE CALENDAR

Is he still God ? No, truly. Then all he knows
Is he must keep the course he has resolved on ;
He spends the coin on a feast of fish and almonds,
And back to the ramparts briskly enough he goes.

Essay on Knowledge.

Be assured, the Dragon is not dead,
Who once more from the pools of peace
Shall rear his fabulous green head.

The flowers of innocence shall cease
And like a harp the wind shall roar
And the clouds shake an angry fleece.

“ Here, here is certitude,” you swore,
“ Below this lightning-blasted tree.
Where once it strikes, it strikes no more.”

(Fool !) And you sang “ Here is a Three
And in this Three love lives unshaken
As now, so must it always be.”

You sang with harsh notes to awaken
That ancient toad who sits immured
Within your hearth-stone, light-forsaken.

He knows that limits long endured
Must open out in vanity.
That gates by bolts of gold secured
Must open out in vanity.

That thunder bursts from the blue sky,
That gardens of the mind fall waste.
That age-established brooks run dry.
That age-established brooks run dry.

A Letter from Wales.

*Richard Rolls to his friend, Captain Abel Wright. **

This is a question of identity
Which I can't answer. Abel, I'll presume
On your good-nature, asking you to help me.
I hope you will, since you too are involved
As deeply in the problem as myself.
Who are we? Take down your old diary, please,
The one you kept in France, if you *are* you
Who served in the Black Fusiliers with me.
That is, again, of course, if I am I—
This isn't Descartes' philosophic doubt
But as I say a question of identity
And practical enough.—Turn up the date,
July the twenty-fourth, nineteen-sixteen,
And read the entry there.

“*To-day I met
Meredith, transport-sergeant of the Second.
He told me that Dick Rolls had died of wounds.
I found out Doctor Dunn, and he confirms it ;
Dunn says he wasn't in much pain, he thinks.*”

Then the first draft of a verse-epitaph
Expanded later into a moving poem.
“Death straddled on your bed : you groaned and tried
To stare him out, but in that death-stare died.”

Yes, died, poor fellow, the day he came of age.
But then appeared a second Richard Rolls
(Or that's the view that the facts force on me)
Showing Dick's features to support his claim
To rank and pay and friendship, Abel, with you.
And you acknowledged him as the old Dick,
Despite all evidence to the contrary,
Because, I think, you missed the dead too much.
You came up here to Wales to stay with him
And I don't know for sure, but I suspect

*The characters and incidents are unhistorical.

THE CALENDAR

That you were dead too, killed at the Rectangle
One bloody morning of the same July,
The time that something snapped and sent you Berserk :
You ran across alone, with covering fire
Of a single rifle, routing the Saxons out
With bombs and yells and your wild eye ; and stayed there
In careless occupation of the trench
For a full hour, reading, by all that's mad,
A book of pastoral poems ! Then, they say,
Then you walked slowly back and went to sleep
Without reporting ; that was the occasion,
No doubt, they killed you : it was your substitute
Strolled back and laid him down and woke as you
Showing your features to support his claim
To rank and pay and friendship, Abel, with me.
So these two substitutes, yours and my owns
(Though that's an Irish way of putting it
For the I now talking is an honest I
Independent of the I's now lost,
And a live dog's as good as a dead lion),
So, these two friends the second of the series
Came up to Wales pretending a wild joy
That they had cheated Death : they stayed together
At the same house and ate and drank and laughed
And wrote each other's poems, much too lazy
To write their own, and sat up every night
Talking and smoking almost until dawn.
Yes, they enjoyed life, but unless I now
Confound my present feelings with the past*
They felt a sense of unreality
In the proceedings—yes, that's good, *proceedings*—
It suggests ghosts. Well, then I want to ask you
Whether it really happened. Eating, laughing,
Sitting up late, writing each other's verses,
I might invent all that, but one thing happened
That seems too circumstantial for romance.
Can you confirm it ? Yet, even if you can
What does that prove ? for who are you ? or I ?

*A reminiscence from Wordsworth's "Nutting."

POEMS

Listen, it was a sunset. We were out
Climbing the mountain eating blackberries ;
Late afternoon, the third week in September.
The date's important : it might prove my point,
For unless Richard Rolls had really died
Could he have so recovered from his wounds
As to go climbing less than two months later ?
And if it comes to that, what about you ?
How had you come on sick-leave from the Line ?
I don't remember you as ill or wounded.
Anyhow We were eating blackberries
By a wide field of tumbled boulderstones
Hedged with oaks and nut-trees. Gradually
A glamour spread about us, the low sun
Making the field unreal as a stage,
Gilding our faces with heroic light ;
Then oaks and nut-boughs caught this golden flood
Sending it back in a warm flare of green
There was a mountain ash among the boulders
But too full-clustered and symmetrical
And highly coloured to convince as real.
We stopped blackberrying and someone said
(Was it I or you ?) " It is good for us to be here."
The other said " Let us build Tabernacles."
(In honour of a new Transfiguration ;
It was that sort of moment) ; but instead
I climbed up on the massive pulpit-stone,
An old friend, but unreal with the rest,
And prophesied—not indeed of the future,
But declaimed poetry, and you climbed up too
And prophesied. The next thing I remember
Was a dragon scaly with fine-weather clouds
Poised high above the sun, and the sun dwindling
And then the second glory.

You'll remember

That we were not then easily impressed
With pyrotechnics whether God's or Man's.
We had seen the sun rise daily, weeks on end,
And watched the nightly rocket-shooting, varied
With red and green, and livened with gun-fire

THE CALENDAR

And the loud single-bursting overgrown squib
Thrown from the minen-werfer : and one night
From a billet-window some ten miles away
We had watched the French making a mass-attack
At Notre Dame de Lorette, in a thunderstorm.
That was a grand display of all the Arts,
God's, Man's, the Devil's : in the course of which
So lavishly the piece had been stage-managed,
A Frenchman was struck dead by a meteorite,
That was the sort of gala-show it was !
But this Welsh sunset, what shall I say of it ?
It ended not at all as it began,
An influence rather than a spectacle
Raised to a strange degree beyond all wonder.
And I remember that we looked and found
A region of the sky below the dragon
Where we could gaze behind all time and space
And see as it were the colour of pure thought,
The texture of emptiness, and at that sight
We came away, not daring to see more ;
Death was the price, we knew, of such perfection ;
And walking home

fell in with Captain Todd,

The Golf-Club Treasurer ; he greeted us
With "*Did* you see that splendid sunset, boys ?
Magnificent, was it not ? I wonder now,
What writer could have done real justice to it
Except, of course, my old friend Walter Pater ?
Ruskin perhaps ? Yes, Ruskin might have done it."

Well, *did* that happen, or am I just romancing ?
And then again, one has to ask the question
What happened after to that *you* and *me* ?
I have thought lately that they too got lost.
My representative went out once more
To France, and so did yours, and yours got killed,
Shot through the throat while bombing up a trench
At Bullecourt ; if not there, then at least
On the thirteenth of July, nineteen eighteen,
Somewhere in the neighbourhood of Albert,

POEMS

When you took a rifle bullet through the skull
Just after breakfast on a mad patrol.
But still you kept up the same stale pretence
As children do in nursery battle-games
“ No, I’m not dead. Look, I’m not even wounded.”
And I admit I followed your example,
Though nothing much happened that time in France.
I died at Hove after the Armistice,
Pneumonia, with the doctor’s full consent.

I think the *I* and *you* who then took over
Rather forgot the part we used to play ;
We wrote and saw each other often enough
And sent each other copies of new poems,
But there was a constraint in all our dealings,
A doubt, unformulated, but quite heavy
And not too well disguised. Something we guessed
Arising from the War, and yet the War
Was a forbidden ground of conversation.
Now *why*, can you say *why*, short of accepting
My substitution view ? Then yesterday
After five years of this relationship
I found a relic of the second Richard,
A pack-valise marked with his name and rank
And a sunset started, most unlike the other,
A pink-and-black depressing sort of show
Influenced by the Glasgow School of Art.
It sent me off on a long train of thought
And I began to feel badly confused
Being accustomed to this newer self ;
I wondered whether you could reassure me.
Now I have asked you, do you see my point ?
What I’m asking really isn’t “ Who am I ? ”
Or, “ Who are you ? ” (you see my difficulty ?)
But a stage before that, *how am I to put*
The question that I’m asking you to answer ?

Poe's Analysis of Inspiration

BY DOUGLAS GARMAN.

NO one realised more fully than Poe the gulf of æsthetic understanding which separated him from his American contemporaries, yet even he could not have foreseen that, by an unusual and paradoxical fate, his genius would be adopted by the French before it was handed back, recognised, to his countrymen and to us. The result of this vicarious recognition has been a tendency for us to see in him only the author of *Tales of Mystery and Imagination* and a harsh critic who considered a long poem to be a contradiction in terms. From his own poetry we turn too lightly aside, forgetting that Baudelaire found it "*profonde et plaintive . . . transparente et correcte comme un bijou de crystal*," that Mallarmé was at pains to translate it, that in the opinion of Remy de Gourmont it contained Poe "*tout entier*." To find the reason for such unstinted admiration it is not sufficient for us to consider his poetry; we must also examine the poetic theories which hampered his achievement at the same time that they freed him from those false conceptions of poetry abounding during his lifetime.

Poe was not a great poet in his practice of verse. His poems (with two or three exceptions) are not intrinsically beautiful, for unless they are read through the veil of his theories, their latent beauty escapes us. But, since he was a poetical genius, to understand him it is exactly thus that they should be read.

"I would define, in brief, the Poetry of words as *The Rhythmical Creation of Beauty*." This is the fundamental, incontrovertible axiom from which he sets out, whether to criticise or to create, and to it he adds a definition of beauty and an explanation of rhythm. Having decided that a poem "deserves its title only inasmuch as it excites, by elevating the soul," he maintains that this can only be done through that sense of the Beautiful which is an immortal instinct in the spirit of man; and by beautiful he does not denote the "mere appreciation of the Beauty before us—but a wild effort to reach the Beauty above." For the moment—that is to say in *The Poetic Principle*—he does not further discuss the

nature of Beauty, but turns to a consideration of Truth and Duty, the two abstracts which teased 19th Century poetry almost to death.

"Dividing the world of mind into its three most immediately obvious distinctions, we have the Pure Intellect, Taste, and the Moral Sense," he says; "we find the *offices* of the trio marked with a sufficient distinction. Just as the Intellect concerns itself with Truth, so Taste informs us of the Beautiful, while the Moral Sense is regardful of Duty. Of this latter, while Conscience teaches the obligation, and Reason the expediency, Taste contents herself with displaying the charms: waging war upon Vice solely on the ground of her deformity—her disproportion—her animosity to the fitting, to the appropriate, to the harmonious—in a word, to Beauty." Nor does he stop here. He goes on to elaborate the relationship of these three distinctions with a clarity and completeness which leave no opportunity for quibbling. He does not make the mistake, too common in the theory of his followers, of underrating the intimacy of that relationship. "It by no means follows, however, that the incitements of Passion, or the precepts of Duty, or even the lessons of Truth, may not be introduced into a poem, and with advantage . . . but the true artist will always continue to tone them down in proper subjection to that *Beauty* which is the atmosphere and the real essence of the poem." That is to say that, though poetry may result from the perception of the harmony existing in a truth, the effect obtained is "referable to the harmony alone, and not in the least degree to the truth which merely served to render the harmony manifest."

At this time the truth and originality of this doctrine are not so startling as when it was first expounded, for the way to our acceptance of it has been paved by a body of poetic achievement of which the worth cannot be denied. Baudelaire, at once the most positively creative and fruitfully influential poet of the latter half of the 19th Century, accepted these theories with no other amendment than that which his genius enforced. He found in Poe an affinity of soul, and the reason for this affinity arose from Poe's uncompromising search for the ideal beauty. Later we shall try to explain the comparative failure of Poe's poetry, but first of all we must investigate the meaning of the other half of his definition of poetry—of the word "rhythmical."

From *The Poetic Principle* much cannot be learned of the meaning he attributed to this word, but already there are

signs of that over stressing of music, "in its various modes of metre, rhythm and rhyme," which was one of the causes of the disparity between his poetic intention and achievement. He goes further than merely to emphasise the importance of music: he adds that in it, perhaps, "the soul most nearly attains the great end for which, when inspired by the poetic sentiment, it struggles—the creation of supernal Beauty." There is truth in this statement, for music is the factor common to all poetry and that which is, since its appeal is the most directly sensuous one made by language, essential. It is the quality of verse which most readily triumphs over the idiosyncratic use of words and phrasing: but it is not the only essential, and Poe was in danger, in practice more than in theory, of losing sight of the face-value of language as a means of materialising thought.

Apart from this, much of what he says concerning the less essential methods of creating rhythm shows a surprisingly prescient sensitiveness to the possible uses of language. Synæresis, or "blending," he unequivocally condemns (in *The Rationale of Verse*), and gives as his reason, that there is "no absolute necessity for adhering to the precise number of syllables, provided the time required for the whole foot is preserved inviolate." But though "in all rhythms the prevalent or distinctive feet may be varied at will, and nearly at random, by the *occasional* introduction of equivalent feet," he insists that "it is the business of the poet so to construct his line that the intention *must* be caught *at once*." This is the most important of his purely prosodical innovations, but he adds much that is of great value as to the use of alliteration, of "unusual and unanticipated" rhyme, and of refrains, and most emphatically denies the right of the poet to inversion. One other saying, this time from the *Marginalia*, is to be remarked as further evidence of the degree to which modern poetry has been unwittingly influenced by Poe. Emphasising the intolerableness of inversion, he says: "In short, as regards verbal construction, the *more prosaic* a poetical style is the better."

So far we have considered Poe only as a theorist; but there are other reasons than the opinion of critics, notably Frenchmen, for our considering him as a poet. Baudelaire

POE'S ANALYSIS OF INSPIRATION.

has shown that, insomuch as a poet has need of a Poetic, the theories developed by Poe are sufficient for the creation of the greatest poetry. Yet the theorist himself only reached that standard on very rare occasions. He was, it is true, continually hampered by the necessity, which he was under all his life, to earn his living by journalism. That balance of mental and physical health which creative work demands was denied him, and the continual obligation to criticise poetry for which he felt but little respect, exacerbated unduly the analytical tendency of his mind. He was quite right in his scornful denial of the fallacy that poets "compose by a species of fine frenzy": to disprove it, he wrote *The Philosophy of Composition*. But in asserting that his design was "to render it manifest that no one point in its composition [he was speaking of *The Raven*] was referable either to accident or intuition," he lost sight, momentarily, of a fact to which in another place he had drawn attention. One of the *Marginalia* shows that he believed the perception of that beauty "supernal to the human nature"—that is to say, the supernal beauty which alone affords the proper scope for poetry—to be but an "instantaneous intuition." When, in the same note, he goes on to say that from experiments he could "be sure, when all circumstances were favourable, of the supervention of the condition" governing that perception, he does not deny that the perception is an "instantaneous intuition"—that is to say, involuntary—for he adds, "the favourable circumstances are, however, rare—else had I compelled, already, the heaven into the earth." Yet in tracing the growth of *The Raven*, he maintains that he has done this very thing, and the truth of his assertion can be gauged by the absence, in that poem, of the inspirational quality which alone could give it the true poetic life. Here, then, is one cause for his comparative failure as a poet, and it leads immediately to another—his increasing tendency to limit the meaning of Beauty.

So intent was he on discovering the essential, the ideal beauty, that he set up for himself a criterion which excluded, more and more, any mode of perception other than that induced by the poetic mood. And this mood was not, for him—as it was for Baudelaire—a crucible in which *any* experience might be transmuted to the ideal, for he would only admit the

poetic potentiality of a certain range of experience. Beginning with the conviction that "the naked senses sometimes see too little—but then *always* they see too much," he grew to rely, almost entirely, on his power of ensuring the supervention of the condition which would allow him to assimilate those fancies, or "psychal impressions," having the "absoluteness of novelty." In practice he failed to perceive that through passion and truth harmonies might be manifested which, before, were not apparent. The sphere of his poetic consciousness was shifted from that wherein he had conceived such poems as *The Coliseum*, the two poems *To Helen*, *The Sleeper* and *The City in the Sea*, to the ethereal, unreal world of *Ulalume* and *The Raven*. Following his theories, he turned aside from much which he showed in the Tales to have the true poetic quality. The result was a sort of barren coldness, the danger of which he foresaw when he wrote: "There *are* artists, however, who fancy only the *finest* material, and who, consequently, produce only the *finest* ware. It is generally very transparent and excessively brittle."

To anyone, however, who has read Poe's poetry, there will be another, and more obvious, cause for dissatisfaction. It lies in his application of technique. In *The Rationale of Verse* he designated verse as "an inferior or less capable music"; a faulty definition to which attention has already been drawn. But though this over-emphasis of the musical element of verse dictated lines like "In my most immemorial year," it was also responsible for some of his finest poetry.

"Lo! Death has reared himself a throne
In a strange city lying alone
Far down within the dim West,
Where the good and the bad and the worst and the best
Have gone to their eternal rest."

Here the first three lines are perfect and inevitable *because* of their music. Later this intuitive rhythm degenerated into the mechanism of *The Bells* or *The Raven*, but even these poems do not discount the truth of his prosodical doctrine; they suffer only from its excessive practice.

These quotations are sufficient to show that Poe, though he was not a great poet, was one of the greatest poetical geniuses of the last century, and that occasionally his practice

POE'S ANALYSIS OF INSPIRATION.

and theory attained the superb balance which could create true poetry, in spite of the small quantity of verse that he wrote. With Baudelaire he shares the honour of having instigated a new poetic era, and the influence which he exerted has not yet had its full effect either in his own country or in England. It would have been easy to have shown him as a poet in a more positive light, had it not been our intention to explain the discrepancy between his intention and his achievement. "It too often happens," he said, "that to reflect analytically upon Art is to reflect after the fashion of the mirrors in the temple of Smyrna, which represent the fairest images as deformed"; but then he also wrote: "To say that the critic could not have written the work which he criticises is to put forth a contradiction in terms."

Scrutinies

BY EDGELL RICKWORD.

(1) Sir James Barrie

THE discussion begins in Thrums, a mountain-village north of the Tweed. *The Little Minister*, from the ethnologist's point of view, is a useful compilation of the habits, customs and superstitions of the tribe which inhabits Thrums. The story is told, as everyone knows, through the Dominie, a character who possesses the germ of that trick of observation which Barrie afterwards turned to account, and also the quality of secular piety which suffuses the whole of Barrie's work. Though he is not entirely Barrie, the Dominie is clearly a rough draft, and his relation to the tribe is very much like Barrie's relation to metropolitan society. The tribesmen of Thrums regarded their little Minister just as primitive peoples look on their medicine-men and witch-doctors. He is the intermediary between them and the Big Man who makes the crops grow. In order that his petitions may be efficacious, he must possess certain virtues, must keep the traditional taboos with a strictness not essential in the lay tribesman. When he becomes polluted, as Gavin was by his affair with Babbie, he is likely to be dismissed in favour of a more scrupulous or cautious one; he is in danger even of mutilation: "The very women is cursing him, and the laddies has begun to gather stones."

Naturally, the personal property of the witch-doctor is a fetish, invested with the virtues which belong to his vocation:

"This was not the only time Jean had been asked to show the minister's belongings. Snecky Hobart, among others, had tried on Gavin's hat in the manse kitchin, and felt queer for some time afterwards. Women had been introduced on tip-toe to examine the handle of his umbrella."

The Dominie, it will be gathered, was more intelligent than most of the community; at least, he was able to observe them with that astuteness, within the distorted image of reality Barrie gives us, which is one of the positive virtues of his plays. So, when he came to describe a more sophisticated society, Barrie sometimes introduced a little trenchant maxim, almost

SCRUTINIES (I)

a cynicism; a tiny mischievous wriggle not meant to be taken too seriously by the Big Man of Thrums, who, of course, had an eye on a stalk like a snail's for wandering tribesmen. So Barrie, or that other self M'Connachie, who, he tells us, writes his plays, has only been able to conceive a perfected action by an escape into fantasy. He has never had, like the Southerner Hardy, the audacity to state the indifference of the Universe. Though his plays are admirably free from didacticism, one is generally aware of a pendulous Benevolence from which their characters suck a comforting resignation. The lack of emancipation from theological concepts reacts on his attitude to sex. Though he outgrew the extreme idealisation of women which the maudlin Dominie expressed—"all that is carnal in me is my own, and all that is good I got from her"—the sweet and capable creature who appears so monotonously in the plays, was turned out of the same mould. Barrie's eyes are keen enough to have seen deeper had he wished to follow the ramifications of the desire *d'être un peu l'Homme avec la Femme*, yet his men and women have the tendency to fall into the relationship of mother and child. He has expressed with a distasteful accuracy the furtive sex-interest of the unemancipated male.

"They are two bachelors who all their lives have been afraid of nothing but Woman. David in his sportive days—which continue—has done roguish things with his arm when taking a lady home under an umbrella from a *soirée*, and has both chuckled and been scared on thinking of it afterwards."

The skill with which Barrie handles the half-human material he selects for use on the stage, to some extent dazzles the spectator into accepting a sleight-of-hand. It is only on coming closer that one can see the cotton thread running from the puppet's breeches to the showman's heart, for it is Barrie's heart which pumps into them whatever vitality they possess. He loves them and wants them to be loved so very much. The way in which, in the printed text, he insinuates his people on to the stage, shows an evident anxiety to win sympathy for them at the outset. He and Shaw are back to back on the circumference of a circle, for Shaw, by his diagrammatic preliminary directions, and the aggressive shove with which he pitches his people into their opening lines, seems to repel any sentimental inclination from the audience. The real

THE CALENDAR

dramatist's attitude to his creations is paternal ; he watches them with curiosity and passion ; he does not intervene in the destiny which his impulse has set in motion. His fertility is everything, the objects of his fertility nothing, to him. Barrie, on the other hand, has a maternal solicitude in protecting his characters, not only from Consequence, but from the criticism of the audience. He darts here and there like the showman with his duster in *Boutique Fantasque*, petting his characters and displaying their good points to the best advantage. Alice's maternal instinct requires fresh attention (for he has rather emphasised her gay, flirtatious nature), so when she finds her daughter in the cupboard in a man's chambers he puts in parenthesis, "It has been the great shock of Alice's life." Maggie, a prominent politician's wife, must be rehabilitated as a *cliché* of Scotch industry and domestic virtue, so she resumes her knitting. What has been hailed as a triumph of dramatic *volte-face*, the ballroom scene between Valentine Brown and Phœbe, in *Quality Street*, is brought about by the author's prejudice in favour of spinsterdom, by forcing a ten-year-old sentiment into a position of supremacy over the natural attraction towards physical youth and vitality.

There is an essential dramatic deficiency in this failure to separate his figures from his own emotional attitude towards them, a failure to complete the objectification of feeling which is the condition of art. It has prevented him from presenting any real conflict of character, which is the mainspring of comedy, as his belief in the friendliness of destiny would have prevented his success in tragedy, which springs from a sense of the hostility of destiny to the hero. No dramatist, of course, has been able to create a character absolutely antipathetic to himself ; but a dramatist of the narrowest sympathies might construct a very fine play if he could imagine the one essential, an antipathy among the characters themselves. This need not involve an ethical hostility, for hero and villain have long since been relegated to the melodrama, but it must involve a temperamental conflict. Since all Barrie's characters are so closely attached to himself, they all swim in the sweet oily liquor of universal pathos which is his philosophy of life. A dramatist may deny a fact of circumstance at his own risk ; he can only contradict a spiritual fact at the expense of

extinction. The law which Barrie has violated is that of the conservation of spiritual energy. Whatever access of passionate life we receive is at the expense of some other individual ; if we give it out again it can only be in a lower form. We tear the spirits of our friends for emotional food as unconsciously, and as inevitably, as we ravage land and sea for our dinner, and with as little animosity. At the end of a play, comedy or tragedy, if it is what we call successful, the level of desirable emotion has been heightened in those characters with whom the writer has decided that we shall identify our sympathies ; others are inevitably the poorer. Barrie's peculiar trick, and that which prevents one from receiving any genuine stimulation from his plays, is a confusion of the emotional perspective ; by this means, emotions of loss or deprivation are made equivalent in value to those of fruition. One feels that the M'Connachie who writes Barrie's plays would give up his mistress to a rival with more pleasure than he would embrace her ; the necessary compensation is derived through a system of social values at the root of which may be found the Edict of Thrums against the satisfaction of impulses. No one could be less of a Calvinist than Barrie, for he is what is left of a man when Calvinism has done its worst. Frighten a man out of doing wrong, of offending God and his neighbour, and you have the most amenable piece of sentimentality which any pusillanimous populace could desire. To go and see a Barrie play is like going to see a sheep in a cage in the Zoo ; the bars, the "drama," are merely a device to encourage mutual self-esteem.

It would not matter that there are no villains in Barrie's work ; villains are a relic of an obsolete ethical dualism. The most favourable critic, I suppose, would not assert that Lord Rintoul, in *The Little Minister*, was anything but a literary machine, a naughty English lord from a *feuilleton*, a foil to a God-fearing monogamous Scot. Lady Sybil (also English) is so film-like a vampire that she can be thrown aside when she has played the part of temptress long enough to "bring together" John and Maggie Shand. Captain Hook is the nearest thing to a villain Barrie has ever dared to imagine ; he is the shadow of reality troubling Barrie's fantasy, and because he is admitted, even as a fantastic shadow derived from Stevenson's romantic shadow, *Peter Pan* has a

vitality which the plays of experience lack. In the language of psycho-analysis, Peter Pan is a symbol of the libido, wandering in the asexual infantile world from which it has never been able to escape. The pirates represent that glimmering sense of the hostility of reality which Barrie has so consistently denied in his other work. The ease with which the pirates are defeated by the Lost Boys gives away, perhaps, the secret of Barrie's failure as an artist ; his ingenuity of fancy has always found a way round an experience, along pre-established lines, so easily. We cannot accept Peter Pan as a valid symbol of Joy. He is the boy who would not grow up, but that is the freak of an adult who cannot face the responsibility of adult life. It is middle-age, much more than youth, that the play represents. The boy is actually in a ferment to grow up, to shed his dependences and ignorances. As Mr. Desmond MacCarthy said of Barrie's attitude to young people : " Judging him as an artist, he strikes me in general as beautifully unshockable, most wisely indulgent ; but there is one thing I think would shock him artistically—a youth who did not take an enthusiastic, trusting attitude towards the world, who was discontented, though not personally persecuted, sceptical, self-withdrawn, world-questioning, disillusioned. I cannot approve Sir James Barrie as a lover of youth, because I have never yet seen in his work that sympathy with pimpled and sullen spiritual gawkishness, which, it seems to me, youth's true lover must also possess." The play reveals better than any other what the critic of a great paper described as the " infinitely various cleverness with which he reveals his loveableness." But I think the fantasy coarse beside that of Lewis Carroll, and the romance weak after that of Stevenson. The loveableness remains, but that is purchased at the price Barrie usually asks one to pay, the surrender of all conflict, which is really the surrender of all values. Even here there are specimens of that terrible insensitiveness to human nature which results from a refusal to face the grossness of its pain.

" When was I born, Mummy ?

At midnight, dear.

I hope I didn't wake you, Mummy."

Such a *calembour* in sentiment, if dashed out, might pass for a lapse of genius ; produced with such a consummate air,

to be flashed on the screen as a sub-title, it can only indicate the absence of understanding. It is done with a smile, as if he did Nature a favour by pretending not to notice her whilst she was making up — that grim and indelicate process. Faced with a charwoman's bonnet, which it would be difficult to make effectively of the Barrie atmosphere by a description in terms of fusty gimp and jet, he slips off at a familiar emotional tangent: "Such a kind old bonnet that it makes you laugh at once; I don't know how to describe it, but it is trimmed with a kiss, as bonnets should be when the wearer is old and frail."

"Trimmed with a thimble" Pan would have said, and the conventions of the fantastic would have condoned what is intolerable in a scene of actuality.

A few years ago, in a Rectorial Address at St. Andrew's University, Sir James Barrie anticipated a criticism of the older by the younger generation, whom he imagines saying that the older generation's "avoidance of frankness in life and in the arts is often, but not so often as you think, a cowardly way of shirking unpalatable truths." Surely no young man would have the self-complacency to accuse Sir James Barrie of doing any of these things, even as often as he might, it seems, be willing to admit to them. In any case, "cowardly" is a word of no significance in the context. It must be plain to any reader that Barrie has transcribed what he felt in life with great fidelity. It is this transcript, not the personality behind it, which is the subject of criticism; its irrelevance to the world as we see it deprives us of a pleasure which our elders undoubtedly enjoyed.

Dostoevsky and Pauline Souslov

TRANSLATED BY S. S. KOTELIANSKY.

The following letter written by Dostoevsky to Mlle. Apollinaria Pankratievna Souslov was quite recently found in Golzief's archives in Moscow, and published in Russia.

Dostoevsky's daughter, Aimée, in her book on her father, which originally appeared in German, in 1920, and was translated into English and published here a couple of years ago, has for the first time given a somewhat lurid account of her father's love affair with Mlle. Souslov—"Pauline," as Aimée D. calls her. From Dostoevsky's letters to his brother Michael, as well as from Mlle. Souslov's diaries and letters, we learn many interesting details of their travels and adventures abroad in 1863, some time before the death of Dostoevsky's first wife, Marie Dmitrievna Issayev.

F. M. DOSTOEVSKY'S LETTER TO Mlle. SOUSLOV.

DRESDEN, April 23-May 5, 1867.

Your letter, my precious friend, was handed over to me at Basunov's (the bookseller) very late, just before I left for abroad ; and as I was in an awful hurry, I could not manage to answer it. I left Petersburg on Good Friday (April 14, I believe) ; my journey to Dresden took a fairly long time, with stops, and I have, therefore, only now found time to have a chat with you.

And so, my dear, you know nothing about me, at any rate you knew nothing when you sent me your letter ? I married last February. According to my contract with Stelovsky [the publisher] I was bound to deliver to him by November 1st of last year a *new novel*, of not less than ten folios of ordinary print ; otherwise I was liable to a terrible fine. Meanwhile I was writing a novel for the *Russky Vestnik**. I had written twenty-four folios, but there remained another twelve to be done. And then, I had also to write the ten folios for Stelovsky. It was the fourth of October, and I had not yet begun. Milyukov advised me to engage a stenographer to whom I could dictate the novel, which would speed up the

* *Crime and Punishment*, published in NN 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, 11-12 of Katkov's review, *Russky Vestnik* for 1886.

work four times. Olkhin, the professor of stenography, sent me his best pupil, a young lady, whom I engaged. And on October 4 we commenced. My stenographer, Anna Gregorievna Snitkin, is a young and rather pretty girl of twenty, of a good family, who passed her school examinations with honours, and is of an extraordinarily kind and bright disposition. The work went off superbly. On November 28 my novel *The Gambler* (just published) was finished in twenty-four days. Towards its completion I noticed that my stenographer was sincerely fond of me, although she had never said a single word about it; and I went on liking her more and more. As since my brother's death* I have grown terribly weary and find life a burden, I have proposed to her. She has agreed, and now we are married. The difference in years is terrible (she twenty and I forty-four), but I am becoming more and more convinced that she will be happy. She has a heart and she can love.

Now about my position generally. You are partly aware that after the death of my brother I lost my health completely through the worry caused by his review†; but, exhausted in my struggle with the indifference of the public and so on and so on, I dropped it. Again, the three thousand roubles (which I received from the sale of my works to Stelovsky) I spent on the review, on my brother's family, and on paying the creditors. The result was that I piled up new debts in connection with the review, which, together with my brother's unpaid debts, amounted to over fifteen thousand roubles. That was the state of my affairs when I left for abroad in 1865, having on me altogether forty Napoleons. Abroad I made up my mind that only by relying on myself should I be able to pay those 15,000 roubles. Besides, with the death of my brother, who was *everything* to me, I have become very sick of life. I still thought of finding a heart that would respond to mine, but I did not find it. Then I plunged into work and began writing a novel. Katkov paid me more than the others, and I gave him the novel. But thirty-seven folios of the novel and another ten folios for Stelovsky turned out to be too much for me, though I have completed both books. My epilepsy became aggravated disgustingly, but after all I diverted myself and also saved

* Michael Dostoevsky died June 10, 1864.

† "*Epocha*," stopped publication in 1865.

myself from prison. The novel (published in the review and in book form) brought me as much as 14,000 roubles, on which I lived, and also paid back twelve thousand of my fifteen thousand debt. Now my debts are altogether about three thousand roubles. But these three thousand are the wickedest. The more you pay back, the more impatient and more stupid creditors become. Mark you, had I not taken over those debts, the creditors would not have received a penny, and they know it themselves, for they had begged me to take them over *out of pity* to them, promising not to touch me. But the repayment of the 12,000 aroused the cupidity of those whose bills had not yet been paid. Now I shall have no money till the new year, and that only if I finish the work on which I am now engaged. But how am I going to finish it if they give me no peace? That is why I went (with my wife) abroad. Again, by living abroad I expect my epilepsy to be relieved, for in Petersburg, lately, it has become almost impossible for me to work. I could no longer work at night, for every time I had a fit. And so I want to recover my health and to finish my work. From Katkov I received money in advance. They gave it willingly. They pay excellently. From the very first I declared to Katkov that I was a Slavophile, and that I did not agree with certain views of his. This improved and smoothed our relations considerably. As a man, he is the noblest fellow on earth. I did not know him at all before. His immense self-love is awfully damaging to him. But who is without immense self-love?

During my last days in Petersburg I met Mme. Brylkin, and paid her a visit. We spoke a great deal about you. She is fond of you. She told me she was very sad about my being happy with another woman. I shall write to her. I like her.

Your letter left a sad impression on me. You say that you are very sad. I have not known your life for the last year, and what has been in your heart, but judging from all I know about you, it is difficult for you to be happy. Oh, my dear, I do not call you to cheap, *necessary* happiness. I respect you (and always respected you) for your exacting nature, and I indeed know that your heart can't help demanding life, but you yourself consider people either infinitely glorious, or—at once

DOSTOEVSKY AND PAULINE SOUSLOV

—scoundrels and banal. I judge from facts. Draw the conclusion yourself.

Au revoir, my eternal friend! I am afraid this letter will not find you in Moscow. Know at any rate that from May 8 (old style) I shall still be in Dresden (that is in any case; I may stay on longer), and therefore, if you wish to answer me, do so immediately on receipt of this letter. (*Poste restante*, Dostoevsky, Dresden, Sax.). My further addresses I will communicate to you. Good-bye, my friend. I press and kiss your hand.

Your F. DOSTOEVSKY.

The following article, written by Leonid Grossman, which contains a good deal of new and valuable information relating to the character of Mlle. Souslov, has recently appeared in a Petersburg literary monthly.

One of Dostoevsky's greatest infatuations goes back to the beginning of the sixties. The young girl Apollinaria Pankratievna Souslov left a most profound trace on the creative activity of Dostoevsky's later period.

From Aimée Dostoevsky's book on her father we can gather only a few facts concerning "Pauline." She arrived in Petersburg from the provinces, and became a student at the University. Although in the beginning of the sixties Dostoevsky only rarely appeared at students' literary evenings, and was not at all so popular with the students and public as he was at the end of the seventies, we take it that Mlle. Souslov had made his acquaintance at one of those evenings. In the existing Dostoevsky archives Apollinaria's first love-letter to him is not to be found, yet we can accept Aimée Dostoevsky's assurance that he had actually received such a letter, and that it moved him by its sincerity, *naïveté*, and romantic tone: the tone of a young girl dazed by the genius of the great writer, and expressing her admiration for him.

At any rate, there is no doubt whatever that in 1863 the love affair between Dostoevsky and Apollinaria was at its height. That summer Dostoevsky travelled abroad in the company of Mlle. Souslov. In his letters to his brothers he quite frankly speaks of the happiness of travelling with his beloved. It is true, however, that his habitual distrust and

THE CALENDAR

disposition to gloom, and, chiefly, his losses at roulette, clouded his first European tour in the company of his beloved.

"We have lots of adventures," writes Dostoevsky to his brother, "yet I feel awfully dissatisfied, in spite of A. S[ouslov]. Even happiness I take with pain, for I have separated myself from all those I have hitherto loved and suffered for many a time. And although I have given up everything for the sake of happiness, even matters in which I could be of use—my egotism and the thought of this are now poisoning my happiness (if indeed it exists at all)."

Dostoevsky's companion suffered because of his gambling losses; she pawned her ring, she experienced together with him the anxieties of a sudden impecuniosity, was afraid of being presented with the hotel bill which could not be met. The history of their relations, evidently complicated by various love incidents, is quite clearly reflected in Dostoevsky's *The Gambler*. Mlle. Souslov's Diary makes it possible to re-establish the history of their personal relations, and it also throws much light on Dostoevsky's method of transforming the raw material of experience into a work of art.

Dostoevsky's relations with Mlle. Souslov did not run smooth; there seem to have been ruptures, reconciliations, violent misunderstandings, and withal a constant mutual attraction. Their correspondence, too, seems to have been interrupted for long intervals, and yet it did not cease even after Dostoevsky's second marriage. On the 5th of May, 1867, that is, two months after his marriage to Anna Gregorievna Snitkin, Dostoevsky sent Mlle. Souslov a detailed letter about the change in his life. [See D.'s letter to Mlle. Souslov published in full above.]

From the Diary of Anna Gregorievna [Dostoevsky's second wife] we learn that she was extremely distressed by the frequent correspondence between her husband and Mlle. Souslov. This is how Mme. D. describes the reading by her husband of a letter from Mlle. Souslov, received on May 27, 1867, whilst they were staying at Dresden.

"All the time he was reading that letter I watched the expression of his face. He read and re-read the first page for a long time as if he could not make out what was written there; then, at last, he read it through and blushed scarlet. His

hands seemed to tremble. I pretended not to know from whom the letter was, and asked him what Soniechka [a relation of D.] was writing about. He said that the letter was not from Soniechka, and gave a bitter smile. I have never yet seen such a smile on his face. It was a smile either of contempt or of pity—indeed, I do not know, but it was a pitiable, lost smile. Afterwards he became awfully distraught, and he hardly could make out what I was saying.”

We are inclined to think that Apollinaria Souslov was the object of Dostoevsky's greatest passion. A woman of extremes, ever disposed to unbounded sensations, to psychological polarities, she demanded a great deal from life. Her inclination to divide people only into saints or villains is as characteristic of her passionate, emotional nature as her constant infatuations, her directness, imperiousness, resoluteness. Her heart, moved to noble impulses of pity and loving-kindness (as, for instance, her tears on hearing of the illness of Dostoevsky's brother), was no less inclined to blind, riotous impulses of passion and persecution. Her sensibility, evidently, did not exclude a certain vein of cynicism. These traits are established beyond doubt from the evidence of V. V. Rosanov, who married Mlle. Souslov the same year in which Dostoevsky died [1881]. It is, however, necessary to bear in mind that Rosanov's account relates to a Pauline no longer young (when he married her she was about forty-five); also perhaps his characterisation of her is somewhat unfavourably biassed. Nevertheless, Rosanov's evidence is of great value, and it also coincides with other evidence from different sources.

“I married her,” says Rosanov, “when I was an undergraduate at the University, a year before I took my degree. But after six years of our married life, she left me, having fallen in love with a young Jew.” Then, in his application to the Synod, Rosanov gives the following information about his first wife: “Apollinaria, née Souslov, left her husband, V. V. Rosanov, in 1886, giving as a reason that her husband, in violation of his promise to her, continued to meet a certain young man, a Jew, Goldovsky, who looked after the distribution of Rosanov's books in the bookshops.” But, from all the evidence at hand, it seems that she, having fallen in love with that Goldovsky, but having met with no response on his part,

persecuted him abominably, and by indescribable quarrels she compelled her husband to break completely with the man. Goldovsky comes of an excellent Jewish family, and is an excellent young man : Apollinaria herself had invited him to spend the summer with the Rosanovs. On the whole, this was one of Apollinaria's most absurd and monstrous actions.

Having settled as teacher at Eletz, Rosanov goes on to say, he asked his wife to return to him, in the hope that in a new place, amongst new people and new surroundings, they would settle down. But she refused. "Thousands of husbands," she replied, "are in the same position as you (*i.e.*, deserted by their wives) and yet they do not whine—men aren't dogs."

Apollinaria's father, to whom Rosanov wrote asking him to use his influence with his daughter and to urge her to return to her husband, wrote to him as follows : "The enemy of the human race [*i.e.*, his daughter] is settled here in my house, and I can no longer remain here myself."

A friend of Rosanov's told me the following. In the nineties Rosanov's life became very miserable owing to Apollinaria's flat refusal to divorce him. In 1902 the late Rosanov sent a friend of his to Sebastopol, where A. resided at that time, to plead with her and to persuade her to divorce him. Apollinaria was over sixty then ; she lived quite alone in her own house, on which was the inscription, "Mrs. V. V. Rosanov's House." The house was extraordinarily clean and tidy ; she herself produced on me the impression of an active and energetic woman. In her conversation with her husband's messenger she remained inflexible. No arguments could change her mind. Of Rosanov she spoke with extreme bitterness, and despite the messenger's persistence, refused to make any concession.

In reply to some questions put to him about his first wife, Mlle. Souslov, by A. S. Volzhsky, a personal friend of his and a student of Dostoevsky's works, Rosanov wrote the following extremely valuable letter :—

"I met Apollinaria for the first time in the house of my pupil, Mlle. A. M. Scheglov (I was 17, Sheglov 20 or 23, Apollinaria 37). Apollinaria was dressed all in black ; her face bore 'traces of former (remarkable) beauty' ; she was a Russian *légitimiste* waiting for the triumph of the Bourbons in France, where she

had left her *best* friends, for in Russia she had none. Here she loved only what was aristocratic. With the look of an 'experienced coquette,' she understood that she had 'hit' me—she spoke coldly, indifferently. In a word, she was a kind of Catharine de Medici. Indeed, she looked like de Medici. A crime she would commit coldly, and would assassinate with too much indifference. . . . Generally speaking, A. was indeed superb. I know that people (and a friend of hers, Anna Osipovna G., fifteen years her senior) were absolutely charmed by her. I have never seen such a Russian woman. In the *style of her soul* she was a perfect Russian, and as a Russian she might have been a *raskolnik* of the 'Universal Harmony' sect, or, better still, a 'Mother of God' of the Khlysts' sect.

"She had had a liaison with Dostoevsky, and lived with him. I once asked her, 'Why did you part from him?'

"'Because he did not want to divorce his [first] wife, who was consumptive and dying,' she said.

"'But she was dying?'

"'Yes, she was. She died six months later. But I had by that time already ceased to love him,' she said.

"'Why did you cease to love him?'

"'Because he did not want to divorce her.' And after a silence, she added:

"'I had given myself to him in love, without questioning, without reasoning. And he, too, ought to have acted likewise. He failed to do so, and I left him.'

"This is her 'style'; the conversation is almost literally correct."

Rosanov asserts that Apollinaria possessed an almost unique fascination, an imperious, captivating "style" of femininity. Coldly sensuous, she remained a "tormentor" even in love, showing deviations from the normal, and perverse traits of a complicated character. Looking back thirty years, Rosanov still remembered, with profound agitation and keenest admiration, the fascination of that strange woman—the Catharine de Medici or the Khlysts' Mother of God.

Rosanov compares Apollinaria to Dostoevsky's heroines. Dounia, Raskolnikov's sister (in *Crime and Punishment*), he says, and Aglaia (in *The Idiot*) are like her. But as to Groushenka (of *The Brothers Karamasov*)—no, nothing of the

kind. Groushenka is an obscene Russian, but in Apollinaria there was nothing coarse or obscene."

Rosanov thinks that the following fragment from Dostoevsky's *Insulted and Injured* characterises Apollinaria perfectly correctly. The fragment is a description of a certain Countess, given by Prince Valkovsky to Ivan Petrovitch: "She was a first-rate beauty," says the Prince. "What a figure, what a bearing, what a gait! Her glance was piercing, like that of an eagle, but ever stern and severe. She was majestic and inaccessible. She was reputed to be as cold as icy winter, and she frightened all away by her exalted, by her rigorous virtue. . . . She regarded everyone dispassionately, like an abbess of a mediæval monastery. . . . And, well? There never was such a voluptuous woman as she was. . . . My lady was so perverse that the Marquis de Sade could have taken lessons from her. . . . Yes, she was the devil incarnate, but an invincibly fascinating devil. . . ." In Rosanov's opinion this description is the best characterisation of Apollinaria, although, in fact, it has no reference to her, for *Injured and Insulted* was written by Dostoevsky before he met Apollinaria.

Rosanov's letter throws a great light on the character of Dostoevsky's love affair with Mlle Souslov. The latter furnished D. with certain characteristics for his "proud girls" and "infernal women." In almost all the novels of Dostoevsky's mature period there appears a new type and character of woman, undoubtedly revealed to him by his captivating and unique travelling companion of 1863.

Fifty Pounds.

By A. E. COPPARD.

AFTER tea Philip Repton and Eulalia Burnes discussed their gloomy circumstances. Repton was the precarious sort of London journalist, a dark deliberating man, lean and drooping, full of genteel unprosperity, who wrote articles about "Single Tax," "Diet and Reason," "The Futility of this, that, and the other," or "The Significance of the other, that and this"; all done with a bleak care, and signed "P. Stick Repton." Eulalia was brown-haired and hardy, undeliberating and intuitive; she had been milliner, clerk, domestic help, and something in a canteen; and P. Stick Repton had, as one commonly says, picked her up at a time when she was drifting about London without a penny in her purse, without even a purse, and he had not yet put her down.

"I can't understand! It's sickening, monstrous!" Lally was fumbling with a match before the penny gas fire, for when it was evening, in September, it always got chilly on a floor so high up. Their flat was a fourth floor one, and there were—O, fifteen thousand stairs! Out of the window and beyond the chimneys you could see the long glare from lights in High Holborn, and hear the hum of buses. And that was a comfort.

"Lower! Turn it lower!" yelled Philip. The gas had ignited with an astounding thump; the kneeling Lally had thrown up her hands and dropped the matchbox, saying "Damn" in the same tone as one might say "Good morning" to a milkman.

"You shouldn't do it, you know," grumbled Repton. "You'll blow us to the deuce." And that was just like Lally, that was Lally all over, always; the gas, the nobs of sugar in his tea, the way she . . . and the, the . . . O dear, dear! In their early life together, begun so abruptly and illicitly six months before, her simple hidden beauties had delighted him by their surprises; they had peered and shone brighter, had waned and recurred; she was less the one star in his universe than a faint galaxy.

This room of theirs was a dingy room, very small but very high. A lanky gas tube swooped from the middle of the ceiling

towards the middle of the table-cloth as if burning to discover whether that was pink or saffron or fawn—and it *was* hard to tell—but on perceiving that the cloth, whatever its tint, was disturbingly spangled with dozens of cupstains and several large envelopes, the gas tube, in the violence of its disappointment, contorted itself abruptly, assumed a lateral bend, and put out its tongue of flame at an oleograph of Monna Lisa which hung above the fireplace.

Those envelopes were the torment to Lally ; they were the sickening, monstrous manifestations which she could not understand. There were always some of them lying there, or about the room, bulging with manuscripts that no editors—they *couldn't* have perused them—wanted ; and so it had come to the desperate point when, as Lally was saying, something had to be done about things. Repton had done all *he* could ; he wrote unceasingly, all day, all night, but all his projects insolvently withered, and morning, noon and evening brought his manuscripts back as unwanted as snow in summer. He was depressed and baffled and weary. And there was simply nothing else he could do, nothing in the world. Apart from his own wonderful gift he was useless, Lally knew, and he was being steadily and stupidly murdered by those editors. It was weeks since they had eaten a proper meal. Whenever they obtained any really nice food now, they sat down to it silently, intently and destructively. As far as Lally could tell, there seemed to be no prospect of any such meals again in life or time, and the worst of it all was Philip's pride—he was actually too proud to ask anyone for assistance ! Not that he would be too proud to accept help if it were offered to him : O no, if it came he would rejoice at it ! But still, he had that nervous shrinking pride that coiled upon itself, and he would not ask ; he was like a wounded animal that hid its woe far away from the rest of the world. Only Lally knew his need, but why could not other people see it—those villainous editors ! His own wants were so modest, and he had a generous mind.

“ Phil,” Lally said, seating herself at the table. Repton was lolling in a wicker armchair before the gas fire. “ I'm not going on waiting and waiting any longer, I must go and get a job. Yes, I must. We get poorer and poorer. We can't go on like it any longer, there's no use, and I can't bear it.”

"No, no, I can't have that, my dear . . ."

"But I will!" she cried. "O, why are you so proud?"

"Proud! Proud!" He stared into the gas fire, his tired arms hanging limp over the arms of the chair. "You don't understand. There are things the flesh has to endure, and things the spirit too must endure. . . ." Lally loved to hear him talk like that; and it was just as well, for Repton was much given to such discoursing. Deep in her mind was the conviction that he had simple access to profound, almost unimaginable, wisdom. "It isn't pride, it is just that there is a certain order in life, in my life, that it would not do for. I could not bear it, I could never rest: I can't explain that, but just believe it, Lally." His head was empty but unbowed; he spoke quickly and finished almost angrily. "If only I had money! It's not for myself. I can stand all this, any amount of it. I've done so before, and I shall do again and again I've no doubt. But I have to think of you."

That was fiercely annoying. Lally got up and went and stood over him.

"Why are you so stupid? I can think for myself and fend for myself. I'm not married to you. You have your pride, but I can't starve for it. And I've a pride, too. I'm a burden to you. If you won't let me work now while we're together, then I must leave you and work for myself."

"Leave! Leave me now? When things are so bad?" His white face gleamed his perturbation up at her. "O well, go, go." But then, mournfully moved, he took her hands and fondled them. "Don't be a fool, Lally; it's only a passing depression, this; I've known worse before, and it never lasts long, something turns up, always does. There's good and bad in it all, but there's more goodness than anything else. You see."

"I don't want to wait for ever, even for goodness. I don't believe in it, I never see it, never feel it, it is no use to me. I could go and steal, or walk the streets, or do any dirty thing—easily. What's the good of goodness if it isn't any use?"

"But, but," Repton stammered, "what's the use of bad, if it isn't any better?"

"I mean . . ." began Lally.

"You don't mean anything, my dear girl."

"I mean, when you haven't any choice it's no use talking moral, or having pride, it's stupid. O, my darling," she slid down to him and lay against his breast, "it's not you, you are everything to me ; that's why it angers me so, this treatment of you, all hard blows and no comfort. It will never be any different, I feel it will never be different now, and it terrifies me."

"Pooh !" Repton kissed her and comforted her : she was his beloved. "When things are wrong with us our fancies take their tone from our misfortunes, badness, evil. I sometimes have a queer stray feeling that one day I shall be hanged. Yes, I don't know what for, what *could* I be hanged for ? At other times I have felt sure that one day I shall come to be—what do you think ?—Prime Minister of this country. You can't reason against such things. I even made a list of the men I would choose for my Cabinet. Yes, oh yes."

But Lally had made up her mind to leave him ; she would leave him for a while and earn her own living. When things took a turn for the better she would join him again. She told him this. She had friends who were going to get her some work.

"But what are you going to do, Lally, I . . . "

"I'm going away to Glasgow," said she.

Glasgow ! He had heard things about Glasgow ! Good Heavens !

"I've some friends there," the girl went on steadily. She had got up and was sitting on the arm of his chair. "I wrote to them last week. They can get me a job almost anywhen, and I can stay with them. They want me to go—they've sent the money for my fare. I think I shall have to go."

"You don't love me then !" said the man.

Lally kissed him.

"But *do* you ? Tell me !"

"Yes, my dear," said Lally, "of course."

An uneasiness possessed him ; he released her moodily. Where was their wild passion flown to ? She was staring at him intently, then she tenderly said : "My love, don't you be melancholy, don't take it to heart so. I'd cross the world to find you a pin."

"No, no, you mustn't do that," he exclaimed idiotically. At her indulgent smile he grimly laughed too, and then sank back in his chair. The girl stood up and went about the room doing vague nothings, until he spoke again.

"So you are tired of me?"

Lally went to him steadily and knelt down by his chair. "If I was tired of you, Phil, I'd kill myself."

Moodily he ignored that. "I suppose it had to end like this. But I've loved you desperately." Lally was now weeping on his shoulder, and he began to twirl a lock of her rich brown hair absently with his fingers as if it were a seal on a watch chain. "I'd been thinking we might as well get married as soon as things had turned round."

"I'll come back, Phil," she clasped him so tenderly, "as soon as you want me."

"But you are not really going?"

"Yes," said Lally.

"You're not to go!"

"I wouldn't go if . . . if anything . . . if you had any luck. But as we are now I must go away, to give you a chance. You see that, darling Phil?"

"You're not to go, I object. I just love you, Lally, that's all, and of course I want to keep you here."

"Then what are we to do?"

"I . . . don't . . . know. Things drop out of the sky. But we must be together. You're not to go."

Lally sighed: he was stupid. And Repton began to turn over in his mind the dismal knowledge that she had taken this step in secret, she had not told him while she was trying to get to Glasgow. Now here she was with the fare, and as good as gone! Yes, it was all over.

"When do you propose to go?"

"Not for a few days, nearly a fortnight."

"Good God," he moaned. Yes, it was all over then. He had never dreamed that this would be the end, that she would be the first to break away. He had always envisaged a tender scene in which he could tell her, with dignity and gentle humour, that . . . Well, he never had quite hit upon the words he would use, but that was the kind of setting. And now, here she was with her fare to Glasgow, her heart turned

towards Glasgow, and she as good as gone to Glasgow ! No dignity, no gentle humour—in fact he was enraged, sullen but enraged ; he boiled furtively. But he said with mournful calm :

“ I’ve so many misfortunes, I suppose I can bear this too.” Gloomy and tragic he was.

“ Dear darling Phil, it’s for your own sake I’m going.” Repton sniffed derisively. “ We are always mistaken in the reasons for our commonest actions ; Nature derides us all. You are sick of me, I can’t blame you.”

Eulalia was so moved that she could only weep again. Nevertheless she wrote to her friends in Glasgow promising to be with them by a stated date.

Towards the evening of the following day, at a time when she was alone, a letter arrived addressed to herself. It was from a firm of solicitors in Cornhill inviting her to call upon them. A flame leaped up in Lally’s heart : it might mean the offer of some work which would keep her in London after all ! If only it were so she would accept it on the spot, and Philip would have to be made to see the reasonableness of it. But at the office in Cornhill a more astonishing outcome awaited her. There she showed her letter to a little office boy with scarcely any finger nails and very little nose, and he took it to an elderly man who had a superabundance of both. Smiling affably the long-nosed man led her upstairs into the sombre den of a gentleman who had some white hair and a lumpy yellow complexion. Having put to her a number of questions relating to her family history, and appearing to be satisfied and not at all surprised by her answers, this gentleman revealed to Lally the overpowering tidings that she was entitled to a legacy of eighty pounds by the will of a forgotten and recently deceased aunt. Subject to certain formalities, proofs of identity, and so forth, he promised Lally the possession of the money within about a week.

Lally’s descent to the street, her emergence into the clamouring atmosphere, her walk along to Holborn, were accomplished in a state of blessedness and trance, a trance in which life became a thousand times aerily enlarged, movement was a delight, and thought a rapture. She would give all the money to Philip, and if he very much wanted it she would

FIFTY POUNDS

even marry him now. Perhaps, though, she would save ten pounds of it for herself. The other seventy would keep them for . . . it was impossible to say how long it would keep them. They could have a little holiday somewhere in the country together, he was so worn and weary. Perhaps she had better not tell Philip anything at all about it until her lovely money was really in her hand. Nothing in life, at least nothing about money, was ever certain; something horrible might happen at the crucial moment and the money be snatched from her very fingers. O, she would go mad then! So for some days she kept her wonderful secret.

Their imminent separation had given Repton a tender sadness that was very moving. "Eulalia," he would say; for he had suddenly adopted the formal version of her name: "Eulalia, we've had a great time together, a wonderful time, there will never be anything like it again." She often shed tears, but she kept the grand secret still locked in her heart. Indeed, it occurred to her very forcibly that even now his stupid pride might cause him to reject her money altogether. Silly, silly Philip! Of course, it would have been different if they had married; he would naturally have taken it then, and really, it would have *been* his. She would have to think out some dodge to overcome his scruples. Scruples were *such* a nuisance, but then it was very noble of him: there were not many men who wouldn't take money from a girl they were living with.

Well, a week later she was summoned again to the office in Cornhill and received from the white-haired gentleman a cheque for eighty pounds drawn on the Bank of England to the order of Eulalia Burnes. Miss Burnes desired to cash the cheque straightway, so the large-nosed elderly clerk was deputed to accompany her to the Bank of England close by and assist in procuring the money.

"A very nice errand!" exclaimed that gentleman as they crossed to Threadneedle Street past the Royal Exchange. Miss Burnes smiled her acknowledgment, and he began to tell her of other windfalls that had been disbursed in his time—but vast sums, very great persons—until she began to infer that Blackbean, Carp & Ransome were universal dispensers of heavenly largesse.

THE CALENDAR

"Yes, but," said the clerk, hawking a good deal from an affliction of catarrh, "I never got any myself, and never will. If I did, do you know what I would do with it?" But at that moment they entered the portals of the bank, and in the excitement of the business Miss Burnes forgot to ask the clerk how he would use a legacy, and thus she possibly lost a most valuable slice of knowledge. With one fifty-pound note and six five-pound notes clasped in her handbag she bade good-bye to the long-nosed clerk, who shook her fervently by the hand and assured her that Blackbean, Carp & Ransome would be delighted at all times to undertake any commissions on her behalf. Then she fled along the pavement, blithe as a bird, until she was breathless with her flight. Presently she came opposite the window of a typewriting agency. Tripping airily into its office she laid a scrap of paper before a lovely Hebe who was typing there.

"I want this typed, if you please," said Lally.

The beautiful typist read the words on the scrap of paper and stared at the heiress.

"I don't want any address to appear," said Lally, "just a plain sheet, please."

A few moments later she received a neatly-typed page folded in an envelope, and after paying the charge she hurried off to a District Messenger office. Here she addressed the envelope in a disguised hand to *P. Stick Repton, Esq.*, at their address in Holborn. She read the typed letter through again :

Dear Sir,

In common with many others I entertain the greatest admiration for your literary abilities, and I therefore beg you to accept this tangible expression of that admiration from a constant reader of your articles, who, for purely private reasons, desires to remain anonymous.

Your very sincere,

WELLWISHER.

Placing the fifty-pound note upon the letter Lally carefully folded them together and put them both into the envelope. The attendant then gave it to a uniformed lad, who sauntered off whistling very casually, somewhat to Lally's alarm—he looked so small and careless to be entrusted with fifty pounds. Then Lally went out, changed one of her five-pound notes

and had a lunch—half-a-crown, but it was worth it. O how enchanting and exciting London was! In two days more she would have been gone; now she would have to write off at once to her Glasgow friends and tell them she had changed her mind, that she was now settled in London. O, how enchanting and delightful! And to-night he would take her out to dine in some fine restaurant, and they would do a theatre. She did not really want to marry Phil, they had got on so well without it, but if he wanted that too she did not mind—much. They would go away into the country for a whole week. What money would do! Marvellous! And looking round the restaurant she felt sure that no other woman there, no matter how well-dressed, had as much as thirty pounds in her handbag.

Returning home in the afternoon she became conscious of her own betraying radiance; very demure and subdued and usual she would have to be, or he might guess the cause of it. Though she danced up the long flights of stairs she entered their room quietly, but the sight of Repton staring out of the window, forlorn as a drowsy horse, overcame her and she rushed to embrace him crying “Darling!”

“Hullo, hullo!” he smiled.

“I’m so fond of you, Phil dear.”

“But . . . but you’re deserting me!”

“O no,” she cried archly, “I’m not—not deserting you.”

“All right.” Repton shrugged his shoulders, but he seemed happier. He did not mention the fifty pounds then: perhaps it had not come yet—or perhaps he was thinking to surprise her.

“Let’s go for a walk, it’s a screaming lovely day,” said Lally.

“O, I dunno.” He yawned and stretched. “Nearly tea-time, isn’t it?”

“Well, we . . .” Lally was about to suggest having tea out somewhere, but she bethought herself in time. “I suppose it is. Yes, it is.”

So they stayed in for tea. No sooner was tea over than Repton remarked that he had an engagement somewhere. Off he went, leaving Lally disturbed and anxious. Why had he not mentioned the fifty pounds? Surely it had not gone to the wrong address? This suspicion once formed, Lally soon became certain, tragically sure, that she had misaddressed

the envelope herself. A conviction that she had put No. 17 instead of No. 71 was almost overpowering, and she fancied that she hadn't even put London on the envelope—but Glasgow. That was impossible, though, but—O the horror!—somebody else was enjoying their fifty pounds. The girl's fears were not allayed by the running visit she paid to the messenger office that evening, for the rash imp who had been entrusted with her letter had gone home and therefore could not be interrogated until the morrow. By now she was sure that he had blundered; he had been so casual with an important letter like that! Lally never did, and never would again, trust any little boys who wore their hats so much on one side, were so glossy with hair-oil, and went about whistling just to madden you. She burned to ask where the boy lived, but in spite of her desperate desire she could not do so. She dared not, it would expose her to . . . to something or other she could only feel, not name; you had to keep cool, to let nothing, not even curiosity, master you.

Hurrying home again, though hurrying was not her custom, and there was no occasion for it, she wrote the letter to her Glasgow friends. Then it crossed her mind that it would be wiser not to post the letter that night; better wait until the morning, after she had discovered what the horrible little messenger had done with her letter. Bed was a poor refuge from her thoughts, but she accepted it, and when Phil came home she was not sleeping. While he undressed he told her of the lecture he had been to, something about Agrarian Depopulation it was, but even after he had stretched himself beside her he did not speak about the fifty pounds. Nothing, not even curiosity, should master her, and so she calmed herself, and in time fitfully slept.

At breakfast next morning he asked her what she was going to do that day.

"O," replied Lally offhandedly, "I've a lot of things to see to, you know; I must go out. I'm sorry the porridge is so awful this morning, Phil, but . . ."

"Awful?" he broke in. "But it's nicer than usual! Where are you going? I thought—our last day, you know—we might go out somewhere together."

"Dear Phil!" Lovingly she stretched out a hand to be

FIFTY POUNDS

caressed across the table. "But I've several things to do. I'll come back early, eh?" She got up and hurried round to embrace him.

"All right," he said. "Don't be long."

Off went Lally to the messenger office, at first as happy as a bird, but on approaching the building the old tremors assailed her. Inside the room was the cocky little boy who bade her "Good Morning" with laconic assurance. Lally at once questioned him, and when he triumphantly produced a delivery book she grew limp with her suppressed fear, one fear above all others. For a moment she did not want to look at it: Truth hung by a hair, and as long as it so hung she might swear it was a lie. But there it was, written right across the page, an entry of a letter delivered, signed for in the well-known hand, *P. Stick Repton*. There was no more doubt, only a sharp indignant agony, as if she had been stabbed with a dagger of ice.

"O yes, thank you," said Lally calmly. "Did you hand it to him yourself?"

"Yes'm," replied the boy, and he described Philip.

"Did he open the letter?"

"Yes'm."

"There was no answer?"

"No'm."

"All right." Fumbling in her bag, she added: "I think I've got a sixpence for you."

Out in the street again she tremblingly chuckled to herself. "So that is what he is like, after all. Cruel and mean!" He was going to let her go and keep the money in secret to himself! How despicable! Cruel and mean, cruel and mean. She hummed it to herself: "Cruel and mean, cruel and mean!" It eased her tortured bosom. "Cruel and mean!" And he was waiting at home for her, waiting with a smile for their last day together. It would *have* to be their last day. She tore up the letter to her Glasgow friends, for now she *must* go to them. So cruel and mean! Let him wait! A 'bus stopped beside her and she stepped on to it, climbing to the top and sitting there while the air chilled her burning features. The 'bus made a long journey to Plaistow. She knew nothing of Plaistow, she wanted to know nothing of Plaistow, but she

did not care where the 'bus took her ; she only wanted to keep moving, and moving away, as far away as possible from Holborn and from him, and not once let those hovering tears down fall.

From Plaistow she turned and walked back as far as the Mile End Road. Thereabouts, wherever she went she met clergymen, dozens of them. There must be a conference, about charity or something, Lally thought. With a vague desire to confide her trouble to some one, she observed them ; it would relieve the strain. But there was none she could tell her sorrow to, and failing that, when she came to a neat restaurant she entered it and consumed a fish. Just beyond her three sleek parsons were lunching, sleek and pink, bald, affable, consoling men, all very much alike.

"I saw Carter yesterday," she heard one say. Lally liked listening to the conversation of strangers, and she had often wondered what clergymen talked about among themselves.

"What, Carter ! Indeed. Nice fellow, Carter. How was he ? "

"Carter loves preaching, you know ! " cried the third.

"O yes, he loves preaching ! "

"Ha ha ha, yes."

"Ha ha ha, oom."

"Awf'lly good preacher, though."

"Yes, awf'lly good."

"And he's awf'lly good at comic songs, too."

"Yes ? "

"Yes ! "

Three glasses of water, a crumbling of bread, a silence suggestive of prayer.

"How long has he been married ? "

"Twelve years," returned the cleric who had met Carter.

"O, twelve years ! "

"I've only been married twelve years myself," said the oldest of them.

"Indeed ! "

"Yes, I tarried very long."

"Ha ha ha, yes."

"Ha ha ha, oom."

"Er . . . have you any family ? "

“No.”

Very delicate and dainty in handling their food they were, very delicate and dainty.

“My rectory is a magnificent old house,” continued the recently married one. “Built originally 1700. Burnt down. Rebuilt 1784.”

“Indeed!”

“Humph!”

“Seventeen bedrooms and two delightful tennis courts.”

“O, well done!” the others cried, and then they all fell with genteel gusto upon a pale blanc-mangé.

From the restaurant the girl sauntered about for a while, and then there was a cinema wherein, seated warm and comfortable in the twitching darkness, she partially stilled her misery. Some nervous fancy kept her roaming in that district for most of the evening. She knew that if she left it she would go home, and she did not want to go home. The naphtha lamps of the booths at Mile End were bright and distracting, and the hum of the evening business was good despite the smell. A man was weaving sweetstuffs from a pliant roll of warm toffee that he wrestled with as the athlete wrestles with the python. There were stalls with things of iron, with fruit or fish, pots and pans, leather, string, nails. Watches for use—or for ornament—what d’ye lack? A sailor told naughty stories while selling bunches of green grapes out of barrels of cork dust which he swore he had stolen from the Queen of Honolulu. People clamoured for them both. You could buy back numbers of the comic papers at four a penny, rolls of linoleum for very little more—and use either for the other’s purpose.

“At thruppence per foot, mesdames,” cried the sweating cheapjack, lashing himself into ecstatic furies, “that’s a piece of fabric weft and woven with triple-strength Andalusian jute, double-hot-pressed with rubber from the island of Pagama, and stencilled by an artist as poisoned his grandfather’s cook. That’s a piece of fabric, mesdames, as the king of heaven himself wouldn’t mind to put down in his parlour—if he had the chance. Do I ask thruppence a foot for that piece of fabric? Mesdames, I was never a daring chap.”

Lally watched it all; she looked and listened; then looked and did not see, listened and did not hear. Her misery

was not the mere disappointment of love, not that kind of misery alone ; it was the crushing of an ideal in which love had had its home, a treachery cruel and mean. The sky of night, so smooth, so be-starred, looked wrinkled through her screen of unshed tears ; her sorrow was a wild cloud that troubled the moon with darkness.

In miserable desultory wandering she had spent her day, their last day, and now, returning to Holborn in the late evening, she suddenly began to hurry, for a new possibility had come to lighten her dejection. Perhaps, after all, so whimsical he was, he was keeping his "revelation" until the last day, or even the last hour, when (nothing being known to her, as he imagined) all hopes being gone and they had come to the last kiss, he would take her in his arms and laughingly kill all grief, waving the succour of a flimsy banknote like a flag of triumph. Perhaps even, in fact surely, that was why he wanted to take her out to-day ! O, what a blind, wicked, stupid girl she was, and in a perfect frenzy of bubbling faith she panted homewards for his revealing sign.

From the pavement below she could see that their room was lit. Weakly she climbed the stairs and opened the door. Phil was standing up, staring so strangely at her. Helplessly and half-guiltily she began to smile. Without a word said he came quickly to her and crushed her in his arms, her burning silent man, loving and exciting her. Lying against his breast in that constraining embrace, their passionate disaster was gone, her doubts were flown ; all perception of the feud was torn from her and deeply drowned in a gulf of bliss. She was aware only of the consoling delight of their reunion, of his amorous kisses, of his tongue tingling the soft down on her upper lip that she disliked and he admired. All the soft wanton endearments that she so loved to hear him speak were singing in her ears, and then he suddenly swung and lifted her up, snapped out the gaslight, and carried her off to bed.

Life that is born of love feeds on love ; if the wherewithal be hidden how shall we stay our hunger ? The galaxy may grow dim, or the stars drop in a wandering void ; you can neither keep them in your hands nor crumble them in your mind.

What was it Phil had once called her ? Numskull ! After

all it was his own fifty pounds, she had given it to him freely, it was his to do as he liked with. A gift was a gift, it was poor spirit to send money to anyone with the covetous expectation that it would return to you. She would surely go to-morrow.

The next morning he awoke her early, and kissed her.

"What time does your train go?" said he.

"Train!" Lally scrambled from his arms and out of bed.

A fine day, a glowing day. A bright sharp air! Quickly she dressed, and went into the other room to prepare their breakfast. Soon he followed, and they ate silently together, although whenever they were near each other he caressed her tenderly. Afterwards she went into the bedroom and packed her bag; there was nothing more to be done, he was beyond hope. No woman waits to be sacrificed, least of all those who sacrifice themselves with courage and a quiet mind. When she was ready to go she took her portmanteau into the sitting-room; he, too, made to put on his hat and coat.

"No," murmured Lally, "you're not to come with me."

"Pooh, my dear!" he protested, "nonsense."

"I won't have you come," cried Lally with an asperity that impressed him.

"But you can't carry that bag to the station by yourself!"

"I shall take a taxi." She buttoned her gloves.

"My dear!" His humorous deprecation annoyed her.

"O, bosh!" Putting her gloved hands around his neck she kissed him coolly. "Good-bye. Write to me often. Let me know how you thrive, won't you, Phil? And"—a little waveringly—"love me always." She stared queerly at the two dimples in his cheeks; each dimple was a nest of hair that could never be shaved.

"Lally darling, beloved girl? I never loved you more than now, this moment. You are more precious than ever to me."

At that, she knew her moment of sardonic revelation had come—but she dared not use it, she let it go. She could not so deeply humiliate him by revealing her knowledge of his perfidy. A compassionate divinity smiles at our puny sins. She knew his perfidy, but to triumph in it would defeat her own pride. Let him keep his gracious mournful airs to the last, false though they were. It was better to part so, better

from such a figure than from an abject scarecrow, even though both were the same inside. And something capriciously reminded her, for a flying moment, of elephants she had seen swaying with the grand movement of tidal water—and groping for monkey-nuts.

Lally tripped down the stairs alone. At the end of the street she turned for a last glance. There he was, high up in the window, waving good-byes. And she waved back at him.

A Post Elizabethan Tragedy.

By SIEGFRIED SASSOON.

'*Tis Pity She's a Whore* ; last acted—Lord
Knows when ! Revived (and played to-night before 'em,)
By the Phœnician Stage Association,
Whose staunch subscribers, eager to applaud
Examples of archaic indecorum,
Combine with this their chaste discrimination.

Though Lamb extolled it, highbrows here allude
(Rapt in a Freudian future) to its "crude
And obsolete psychology." . . . Detractors
Shatter my estimates. I'm disposed to think
(Wandering between the acts in search of drink)
That the audience gets between me and the actors.

They squeeze and smoke ; a jabbering, conscious crowd
Of intellectual fogies, fools, and freaks—
A cultural inferno, parrot-loud,
With *clichés* of accumulated weeks ;
While, here and there, some calmly chatting sage
(Immortalised by Max) exhibits fame
That awes the advertisers of our Age—
Those press-concerned celebrities who came
Intent to shine conspicuous in the stalls.

* * * * *

'*Tis Pity She's a Whore* . . . the curtain falls
On a composed but corpse-encumbered stage
Of expiated incest. Curtain calls
Reanimate the agonists of passion.
And I'm aware, half-hostile and confused,
That, much though the Phœnicians were amused,
Old *Mermaid Dramatists* are out of fashion.

Comments and Reviews

A preconceived idea is, as the artist knows, a tyrant dangerous to the proper organisation of the impulse, definable in no other terms than those of the finished work, which compels him to his strange exertion. The same reticence is necessary even in the humble creation of a Review, in which activity, since it is to some degree an æsthetic one, there is virtue not in intentions but in achievement only. We lay down no programme as to THE CALENDAR'S performance nor prophecy as to its character, since these things cannot interest our readers till they have a tangible existence, and then we shall be ready to join our own criticism with theirs. A conviction of the value of spontaneous growth (or growth which seems spontaneous to the watching mind) and of unpoliced expression, is as near as we come to any public challenge or editorial doctrine.

* * * *

Besides, the readers of a paper have their share in the formation of its indubitality, though it may be designed in the first place with some imagined kind of reader in the foreground. As this hypothesis is corrected by the reality, the balance of sympathies and antipathies is adjusted into an unpredictable harmony.

* * * *

The reader we have in mind, the ideal reader, is not one with whom we share any particular set of admirations and beliefs. The age of idols is past, for an idol implies a herd—to each literary idol a herd of literary worshippers—and for the modern mind the age of herds is past. For some time after the breakdown of the Victorian religion of great men, disconsolate worshippers sought refuge from the rigour of solitary conviction in a succession of literary chapels, each of which claimed its patron as most efficacious to salvation. Scepticism as to the validity of choice has destroyed the comfort of this “exclusiveness” except for a few simple souls. The slang use of “exclusive” was one of the last tremors due to the poison of snobbery, before it was, as it is always in the end, fatal to its devotee. In all seriousness, apparently, a novel was advertised recently as “A Romance for a Few People.” (*111th Thousand*.) That is making the best of both worlds.

* * * *

To-day there is only the race, the biological-economic environment; and the individual. Between these extremes there is no class, craft, art, sex, sect or other sub-division which, it seems to us, can claim privilege of the rest. It is with the mind of the individual, the queer creature, rather new in geological time, which flaunts aggressively or smiles furtively behind the social mask, that literature communicates. Perhaps there are not so many

COMMENTS AND REVIEWS

individuals as there are men and women with names and addresses. Perhaps the streams of people in the street are not so dissimilar as autumn leaves, manure for next summer's generations. The artist, who can differ only in degree and in function from the rest of men, by revealing differences, creates realities. It is through him that we can perfect our individuality, our own shape, which under the comparatively crude strokes of actual experience might remain only roughly chipped out on the surface of that rock of ages, the folk-mind.

* * * *

This view of society means the death of dogma. Parson may roar in the pulpit (and the lay preacher is trying hard just now to snatch a share of the old prestige) but the congregation turn round amicably in the pews to discuss the text with their neighbours. Agreement and disagreement are terms which mean little in such circumstances. The aim of writing is not to convince someone else (for that can never happen against the will) but to satisfy oneself. If, as well, the reader's pleasure is aroused by one of the many means which literature has to waken such a response, then the reader may make a gift of his assent or dissent to the conventions which are founded on those wraiths, for the cycle of expression is complete without them.

In reviewing we shall base our statements on the standards of criticism, since it is only then that one can speak plainly without offence, or give praise with meaning. It is difficult to keep these standards in a little space and still to be just to contemporary work which is perhaps immature. It would be best if our readers would remember that, since we can notice only a few of all the books which are published, our choosing a book at all means that we believe it to merit their attention. The only other books we shall mention will be those whose incompetence has not received sufficient attention in other Reviews. The same reviewers will deal with the same subjects each month, so that their methods of evaluation may become familiar.

* * * *

A monthly review has some difficulty in keeping its notices of books on the heels of publication. A book which is published on the day we go to press has to wait five weeks for notice, by which time everyone has probably read so many reviews of it in daily and weekly papers that they are determined not to read any more. The section "Among New Books" is designed to minimise this inconvenience. Notice of a book in those pages does not preclude a full review in the next issue of *THE CALENDAR* if its subject is found to demand discussion. It is not a receptacle for the less good books of the month, but for those which can be characterised briefly.

Life in the Middle Ages

Our picture of the middle ages, perhaps even more than that of other periods, has been falsified to suit our own prejudices. Sometimes the picture has been too black, sometimes too rosy. The eighteenth century, which had no doubt of itself, regarded mediæval times as merely barbarous; to Gibbon, the men of those days would have been our "rude forefathers." The reaction against the French Revolution produced the Romantic admiration of absurdity, based upon the experience that reason led to the guillotine. This engendered a glorification of the supposed "age of Chivalry," popularised among English-speaking people by Sir Walter Scott. The average boy or girl is probably still dominated by the Romantic view of the middle ages; he or she imagines a period when knights wore armour, carried lances, said "quotha" and "by my halidom," and were invariably either courteous or wrathful; when all ladies were beautiful and distressed, but were sure to be rescued at the end of the story. There is a third view, quite different, though, like the second, it admires the middle ages: this is the ecclesiastical view, engendered by dislike of the Reformation. The emphasis here is on piety, orthodoxy, the scholastic philosophy, and the unification of Christendom by the Church. Like the Romantic view, it is a reaction against reason, but a less naïve reaction, cloaking itself in the forms of reason, appealing to a great system of thought which once dominated the world, and may dominate it again.

In all these views there are elements of truth: the middle ages were rude, they were knightly, they were pious. But if we wish to see a period truly we must not see it contrasted with our own, whether to its advantage or disadvantage: we must try to see it as it was to those who lived in it. Above all, we must remember that, in every epoch, most people are ordinary people, concerned with their daily bread rather than with the great themes of which historians treat. Such ordinary mortals are portrayed in a delightful book by Miss Eileen Power,* which ranges from the time of Charlemagne to that of Henry VII. The only eminent person in her gallery is Marco Polo; the other five are more or less obscure individuals, whose lives are reconstructed by means of documents which happen to survive. Chivalry, which was an aristocratic affair, does not appear in these democratic annals; piety is displayed by peasants and British merchants, but is much less in evidence in ecclesiastical circles; and everybody is much less barbaric than the eighteenth century would have expected. There is, however, in favour of the "barbaric" view, one very striking contrast brought out in the book: the contrast between Venetian art just before the Renaissance, and Chinese art in the fourteenth century. Two pictures are reproduced: one a Venetian illustra-

* *Mediæval People*. Methuen, 6s.

tion of Marco Polo's embarkation, the other a Chinese fourteenth-century landscape by Chao Meng-fu. Miss Power says: "The one (that by Chao Meng-fu) is obviously the work of a highly-developed and the other of an almost naïve and childish civilisation." No one who compares the two can fail to agree with her.

Another recent book,* by Professor Huizinga of Leiden, gives an extraordinarily interesting picture of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in France and Flanders. In this book Chivalry receives its fair share of attention, not from the Romantic point of view, but as an elaborate game which the upper classes invented to beguile the intolerable tedium of their lives. An essential part of Chivalry was the curious courtly conception of love as something which it was pleasant to leave unsatisfied. "When in the twelfth century unsatisfied desire was placed by the troubadours of Provence in the centre of the poetic conception of love, an important turn in the history of civilisation was effected. Courtly poetry . . . makes desire itself the essential *motif*, and so creates a conception of love with a negative ground-note." And again:

"The existence of an upper class whose intellectual and moral notions are enshrined in an *ars amandi* remains a rather exceptional fact in history. In no other epoch did the ideal of civilisation amalgamate to such a degree with that of love. Just as Scholasticism represents the grand effort of the mediæval spirit to unite all philosophic thought in a single centre, so the theory of courtly love, in a less elevated sphere, tends to embrace all that appertains to the noble life."

A great deal of the middle ages may be interpreted as a conflict between Roman and Germanic traditions: on the one side the Church, on the other the State; on the one side theology and philosophy, on the other chivalry and poetry; on the one side the law, on the other pleasure, passion, and all the anarchic impulses of very headstrong men. The Roman tradition was not that of the great days of Rome, it was that of Constantine and Justinian; but even so it contained something which the turbulent nations needed, and without which civilisation could not have re-emerged from the dark ages. Because men were fierce, they could only be curbed by an awful severity; terror was employed until it lost its effect through familiarity. After describing the Dance of Death, a favourite subject of late mediæval art, in which skeletons dance with living men, Dr. Huizinga proceeds to tell of the churchyard of the Innocents in Paris, where Villon's contemporaries promenaded for pleasure:

"Skulls and bones were heaped up in charnel-houses along the cloisters, enclosing the ground on three sides, and lay there open to the eye by thousands, preaching to all the lesson of equality. . . . Under the cloisters the death dance exhibited its images and its stanzas. No place was better suited to the simian figure of grinning death, dragging along pope and emperor,

*The Waning of the Middle Ages. Arnold, 16s.

monk and fool. The Duke of Berry, who wished to be buried there, had the history of the three dead and the three living men carved on the portal of the church. A century later this exhibition of funeral symbols was completed by a large statue of Death, now in the Louvre, and the only remnant of it left. Such was the place which the Parisians of the fifteenth century frequented as a sort of lugubrious counterpart of the Palais Royal of 1789. Day by day crowds of people walked under the cloisters, looking at the figures and reading the simple verses, which reminded them of the approaching end. In spite of the incessant burials and exhumations going on there, it was a public lounge and a *rendezvous*. Shops were established before the charnel houses, and prostitutes strolled under the cloisters. A female recluse was immured on one of the sides of the church. Friars came to preach, and processions were drawn up there. . . . Even feasts were given there. To such an extent had the horrible become familiar."

As might be expected from the love of the *macabre*, cruelty was one of the most highly prized pleasures of the populace. Mons purchased a brigand solely in order to see him tortured, "at which the people rejoiced more than if a new holy body had risen from the dead." In 1488 some of the magistrates of Bruges, suspected of treason, were repeatedly tortured in the market place for the delectation of the people. They begged to be killed, but the boon was refused, says Dr. Huizinga, "that the people may feast again upon their torments."

Perhaps, after all, there is something to be said for the eighteenth-century view.

Dr. Huizinga has some very interesting chapters on the art of the late middle ages. The exquisiteness of the painting was not equalled in architecture and sculpture, which became florid from the love of magnificence associated with feudal pomp. For example, when the Duke of Burgundy employed Sluter to make an elaborate Calvary at Champmol, the arms of Burgundy and Flanders appeared on the arms of the Cross. What is still more surprising is that the figure of Jeremiah, which formed part of the group had a pair of spectacles on its nose! The author draws a pathetic picture of a great artist controlled by a Philistine patron, and then proceeds to demolish it by suggesting that perhaps "Sluter himself considered Jeremiah's spectacles a very happy find." Miss Power mentions an equally surprising fact: that in the thirteenth century an Italian Bowdler, outdoing Tennyson in Victorian refinement, published a version of the Arthurian legends which omitted all reference to the loves of Lancelot and Guinevere. History is full of queer things, for example, that a Japanese Jesuit was martyred at Moscow in the sixteenth century. I wish some erudite historian would write a book called "facts that have astonished me." In such a book Jeremiah's spectacles and the Italian Bowdler would certainly find a place.

BERTRAND RUSSELL.

Triple Biography

MEMOIRS OF THE FOREIGN LEGION. By M. M. With an Introduction by D. H. LAWRENCE. (Secker, 7s. 6d.)

D. H. LAWRENCE AND MAURICE MAGNUS. By NORMAN DOUGLAS. (Obtainable from the Author, c/o T. Cook and Son, Florence. 5s.)

Imagine that an operation is being performed on a body surrendered by the Morgue of Literature to the will of two eminent artists in surgery. The younger of these doctors is like Caméristus in *La Peau de Chagrin*, a specialist, a doctrinaire experimentalist—some say a dangerous crank; the elder resembles Brisset, a brilliant practitioner of the old order, ambitious for cures rather than for science, sceptical of panaceas and famous for the success of his *ad hoc* methods. Add two personal complications: the elder doctor discovers that the corpse is known to him, a former friend, and becomes antipathetic to the horrid designs his colleague intends against it; and the latter alienates him still further from the business by consecrating his scalpel, with distasteful rhetoric, to the unprofessional quest of a "dark god" in the blood of the victim or of the philosopher's stone in the bladder. Imagine the deed done and the subsequent quarrel between the participants, their public controversy on general questions arising from the case, and the revelation of varying taste and temperament in the opinions expressed.

These events would form a rough parallel to the situation which has been brought about by the publication of *Memoirs of the Foreign Legion*, and of Mr. Douglas's pamphlet of protest against the biographical Introduction contributed thereto by Mr. Lawrence. They were both acquainted with Maurice Magnus, the author of the *Memoirs*, during the years of his life in Italy which led up to his suicide in 1920. Magnus seems to have been a fairly typical American *déclassé* idealist straying about the Continent—a sociable, mild-natured adventurer, romantically responsive to the ancient, the royal, the papal, but incapable of preserving *himself* in the naturalistic struggles of the real Old World. This, at any rate, is the impression one gets from his own pages, and there is nothing in either Mr. Lawrence's or Mr. Douglas's account that conflicts radically with such a general estimate of Magnus. The elementary pencilled outline, the factual vision of the outward eye, takes a similar shape in both portraits; it is in the disposition of colours, the laying on of the pigment, the finalising wrest into form, that the differences are manifested. The criticism of conduct is an exact science only for those who interpret it according to the Absolute of a dogmatic religion, or the fictitious Absolute of Law, and our writers adopt

neither of these criteria in their judgments of Magnus's character, or of his petty larcenies. Human personality is a puzzle of Yale locks, and the common-denominator key is kept unused in the safe of the ingenious manufacturer. Perhaps it has been thrown away in a fit of divine anger or mathematical despair. But none of our kind has found it; and, though hope is illimitable, endeavour is restricted to a contemplation of the mechanism's intricate navel.

Here, then, we have Mr. Lawrence, the novelist, giving a hundred-page biography of his reactions to the personality of Maurice Magnus, and Mr. Douglas, the novelist, being moved to write a protest against Mr. Lawrence's particular narrative and the general method of which it is an example. Magnus's own narrative is worth reading for its description of a famously brutal institution. But the main interest of the tripartite affair is its disclosure, more generalised in Mr. Douglas's pages, of the attitude to human personality of two important writers: their attitude to Magnus, to one another, to themselves, and to the general principles arising from the occasion. It would take a treatise to extricate the matter with any thoroughness; all that can be done here is to sketch a few points of difference and show up the odder contrasts.

Mr. Lawrence, from the beginning, surrounds his subject with a mass of vivid and suggestive detail, and he does it with an overt passion which we are inclined to attribute to the effort of creation until we remind ourselves that it must be the effort of remembrance. It was Mr. Douglas, "decidedly shabby and a gentleman, with his wicked red face and tufted eyebrows"—it was Mr. Douglas who, one day in Florence, introduced him to Magnus, who makes his first appearance as "a man of about forty, spruce and youngish in his deportment, very pink-faced, and very clean, very natty, very alert, like a sparrow painted to resemble a tom-tit." There is already a hint of instinctive dislike in the language, but the novelist in Mr. Lawrence sets up a reflex action, for "he was just the kind of man I had never met; little sharp man of the shabby world, very much on the spot, don't you know." From thenceforward, as Mr. Lawrence's relations with Magnus grow more complicated, his observation sharpens, his outspokenness increases, and his *tone* reflects with delightful sensitiveness the state of his *feelings*, which reach a crescendo in the great borrowing scene. It was an embarrassing moment.

"And again he put his hand on my arm, and the tears began to fall from his upturned eyes. I turned my head aside. Never had the Ionian Sea looked so sickening to me. 'I don't want to,' said I."

But, "with bowels full of bitterness," he was drawn deeper into the financial worries which culminated in the suicide of the borrower. This event is the signal for Mr. Lawrence's final change of tone, the notable discord of his Introduction. Like an enthusiastic hunter with his Reynard, our biographer moralises over the

kill. "I could, by giving half my money, have saved his life. I had chosen not to save his life. Now, after a year has gone by, I keep to my choice. . . . No, I would not help to keep him alive, not if I had to choose again. . . . He shall and should die, and so should all his sort ; and so they will." And the funeral sermon fades into an hysterical outburst against the War. Mr. Lawrence's mind is a very Gothic edifice, haphazard with saints and gargoyles. His transitional moral consciousness is continuously rich in the creations of an antithetical fancy. It makes melodrama of his vision of mankind—a species of melodrama which, in the intuitive portions of his work, is of a legitimate and thrilling order, for then the extremism of action is transferred to a level on which the events are the symbols of mental life, and enjoy a scope more plausibly independent than external happenings, of the curtailments of space and time. But Mr. Lawrence's introspective intelligence is too feeble to balance this melodramatic fancy in activities which cater for a free play of mind ; and so, since criticism begins at home, his latter-day garment of philosopher and preacher is shot through with the vulgarity of aggressive self-ignorance. And yet, in this Introduction, he has built up for us an unforgettably real figure of a man. He has achieved this by mixed means ; by keeping his eye unremittingly on the object, while grappling with it in a sort of nervous abandonment. Biographical dignity is scrapped : the recording instrument, like a Robot, shudders into humanity and advances towards the stimulating body in a torment of new experience. It is not the usual biographical instrument, a separator with a private leak. It is a revolutionary organism, whose philosophic justification, if it can offer one, is that it substitutes the aim of "reality" for the aim of "truth," and replaces the superficial definitions of formal justice by the autocratic charity of intensive speculation—the gift, whether beneficial to the subject or not, of the author's imaginative partnership.

Mr. Douglas has another name for the distinguishing quality of this new form ; he calls it "the novelist's touch in biography."

"What is this touch ? It consists, I should say, in a failure to realise the profundities and complexities of the ordinary human mind ; it selects for literary purposes two or three facets of a man or woman, generally the most spectacular, and therefore "useful" ingredients of their character, and disregards all the others. . . . The facts may be correct, but there are too few of them ; what the author says may be true, and yet by no means the truth. That is the novelist's touch. It falsifies life."

And he proceeds to enumerate several instances where, in his opinion, Mr. Lawrence has falsified the life of Maurice Magnus. The anecdotes are supported with good reason and tolerance ; we feel that they are a true representation of Magnus ; what we cannot admit is that, except in one or two matters of fact, they destroy the

validity and value of Mr. Lawrence's representation. The structure of controversy demands positive outlines, but the outlines of Magnus himself in Mr. Douglas's sketch merge like a complementary phantom with those of Mr. Lawrence's portrait. This seems to be due to the fact that both writers present their memories frankly and with practised clarity. Thus, if the self-deceptive spirit of Mr. Lawrence's last pages of general comment had governed his particular narrative; or if Mr. Douglas had dropped his difficult sense of humaneness for the fun of idealising; or if either of them had emended the *Memoirs* in some integral part of its author's self-expression, our image of Magnus would be disturbed. As it is, it would be futile to try and fix one's realisation of him in a number of generalisations, for such judgments would have to be impossibly refined not to violate that "uncommunicability" which the scholastic philosophers considered to be the essential quality of personality. Through Mr. Douglas's description of Magnus, as through Mr. Lawrence's, we watch principally the display of his own faculties and temperament, thrust forward and expanding, like the head of a snail manœuvring an unexpected stone, in the curiosity to discover his man in words. Mr. Douglas's "pagan" lack of nostalgias, that unclouded relish for the inconsistencies of life which is the explanation of his almost pedantically continuous humour, the unworried conventional ethic which gives a dilettante leisure to his exploration of eccentricities; such personal intimations rise up and hang like a qualifying mist over the intention of his narrative. And yet there, beneath the mist, is the outline of Magnus, untraceable by definition—the same outline that we realise, under different atmospherics, in the other two narratives. "Uncommunicability" has been overcome in the only possible way; it is Art, founded on the unity in perception, which presents this object in its singularity. For the *Memoirs*, a primitive document of formless experience, are the rough material of art; Mr. Lawrence's Introduction is art in all its deliberation; and Mr. Douglas, though his artist's course is queered by the necessities of controversy, takes his share in the miracle of this trinity by virtue of the powers of apprehension which make him an artist.

BERTRAM HIGGINS.

THE THIRTEENTH CÆSAR. By SACHEVERELL SITWELL.
(Grant Richards, 6s.).

Mr. Sacheverell Sitwell is a poet with a very specialized and consistent vision, and his strange technique is beginning to fit the body of his poems with an easier individuality and more habitual grace. His art is as purely decorative as poetry can be; the poet seems to be urging his mood towards a second childhood of perception, where words are stripped of their ideal fungus and disclosed as sensuous and limited objects among the vegetation of experience.

Each of these branches is a ghost I've slain,
 It's rind breathes soft to me, its warm throat sings;
 I have snared these shadow-prisoners,
 Like sun among the branches
 Where the ripe fruit fall;
 I have climbed to the tree's core, plucking them;
 The glass world of metaphor, the wood of metamorphosis,
 Die like a ghost's breath on the leaves.

The last age was one in which the common messages of the senses had become chaotic and colourless; ours is more particularly a period of idea-dissociation, and we have reached a stage at which the desire for a restoration of the primitive functions of mind has revived one half of the energies necessary for a great creative efflorescence. Mr. Sitwell's poetry, therefore, is both characteristic and timely. He is intent on delineating a fresh visual environment for his mind. The effort is sometimes made painfully, with a seriousness too self-wrapt (as in "The Wind as Husbandman"), for his scrutiny is of a scene whose shape is as fickle as water. The consciousness receding from concepts is like a drunken man's; whenever it steadies itself the world reels. This explains the disconcerting speed and apparent wantonness with which objects melt and merge in these poems: we are travelling in an express train through a wide sunny country, and we gaze out of the window at haystacks becoming houses becoming cattle becoming people becoming air; and when night extinguishes the landscape the chain of images is continued in fancy. The unities which give equilibrium to this flux of Nature—this multiplication and refining of pictures—are Nature's own elements; Mr. Sitwell, in his need for "machinery," goes back past the figures of myth to Air, Earth, Fire and Water, of which we ourselves are the tutelary deities.

If we order every star, the tides,
 And own all the treasure, what have we to fear?
 God cannot speak to us from off a cloud,
 No longer is He manifest in thunder or the storm;
 We can hit back at him and keep him far.
 Space becomes a lawn for all the dancing stars. . . .

Such an art, though inexhaustible in subject-matter, is restricted in its range of poetic appeal. It is noticeable that when Mr. Sitwell attempts to change his tone to the dramatic, satirical or elegiac, an unpleasant naivety takes hold of the versification, or an Influence discloses himself through the lines to distract their purpose—Browning in "In a Wine Shop," M. Jean de Bosschère in "On Hearing Four Bands Play at Once in a Public Square," and models as distant but unmistakable as *Beowulf* and *The Complaint of Deor* in the elegiac passage of "The Poet and the Mirror." And, as a point of form, a comparison between the general effects of "The Venus of Bolsover Castle" and "Bolsover Castle," two of the most beautiful poems in this volume, the first in a strict, the

second in a free measure, makes one hope that Mr. Sitwell will not cease to cultivate that side of his poetic personality which seeks a discipline against unmindful obscurity and diffuseness.

B. H.

CHARLES BAUDELAIRE, translated by ARTHUR SYMONS.
The Casanova Society. 30s.

From the preface to this book we learn that Mr. Symons considers *Les Paradis Artificiels* to be "the most wonderful book Baudelaire ever wrote," and the tribute he pays to it is that, in translating it, he gives an adequate reproduction of the original. Of the two other works here translated so much cannot be said; they are, in fact, astonishingly bad. Speaking of the *Petits Poèmes en Prose*, he says: "I have tried to be absolutely faithful to the sense, the words and the rhythm." The extent to which he has succeeded will be best appreciated from a few quotations.

No. X. "*Pendant quelques heures*," he translates "during some hours"—this is a gallicism.

No. XI. A man apostrophising "*sa petite maîtresse*" is made to say, "Let us consider carefully, I beg of you"!

No. XVII, for "*Laisse-moi . . . les [cheveux] agiter avec ma main comme un mouchoir odorant*," he gives "Let me agitate thy tresses with my hand like an odorous handkerchief." This may be "in prose," but it is hardly part of a "little poem."

In attempting to translate *Les Fleurs du Mal*, Mr. Symons set himself a still harder task, for not only does he translate them, but he puts them into verse, forgetting, perhaps, that Baudelaire had written: "*mais le mal serait encore plus grand dans une singerie rimée*." Without discussing the intrinsic merits of Mr. Symons's verse, I would say emphatically that his translation is an unpardonable travesty of Baudelaire's poetry. What right has he to render:

*"Nous volons au passage un plaisir clandestin
Que nous pressons bien fort, comme une vieille orange,"*

by

"We steal our pleasures inside a Brothel's door,
Insidious as the orange-skin one touches."?

Why, in a poem beginning "*Ce beaux matin d'été si doux*," should he translate

"Et le ciel regardait la carcasse superbe comme une fleur s'épanouir,"

by

"This superb carcass was not even blinking under the aching moon"?

There is scarcely a single poem which is not marred by some such unpardonable licence.

D. M. G.

THE SISTERS' TRAGEDY, and Three Other Plays. By RICHARD HUGHES (Heinemann, 6s.).

IN spite of the title of this volume, the most important play it contains is *A Comedy of Good and Evil*, which was performed at the Royal Court Theatre on July 6, 1924, under the auspices of the Three Hundred Club. It had a mixed, and, on the whole, an unfavourable reception. From the common standpoint it was even a failure. This was not due to any fault in the production. For although the Three Hundred Club is handicapped for want of money; does not pay its actors, and cannot, therefore, exercise the necessary discrimination in selecting the casts for the plays it produces; does not, perhaps, sufficiently realise the serious responsibility it undertakes when it puts before the public the work of young authors whose future it may endanger; yet, on this occasion, the production, if imperfect, was in essentials adequate—owing chiefly to the good work of the producer, Mr. A. E. Filmer, the remarkable performance of Miss Louise Hampton as Minnie, and Mr. Leslie Banks's fine acting as Minnie's husband, Mr. Williams.

The cause of the play's comparative failure lay in the audience, which is a select one characterised by its high standard of education rather than by any gifts of intelligence or imagination. Mr. Hughes' play deals with the theme of good and evil, and bears on its title page an appropriate quotation from *Lao Tse*: "For one must always be careful of distinctions." It may be admitted at once that as an intellectual contribution to the subtle theme of "good and evil," Mr. Hughes's play is not important; but, on the other hand, it is quite sound intellectually, for if it contributes nothing new, it does not travesty the intelligence—the real intelligence of the age. Of how many plays can one say that? Of very few indeed! Where Mr. Hughes's play excels is in the dramatic representation of his theme. The play is of absorbing interest. It holds the spectator from the rise to the fall of the curtain. It is at turns thrilling, poignant and comic. It progresses smoothly from one phase to another. At moments it is almost intolerably exciting. It combines a most adroit and successful handling of the supernatural with a realistic study of Welsh rural life that is absolutely convincing. Nobody with any sense of the theatre could see this play without realising that here was an author with an innate dramatic sense, for this play is full of dramatic inventions—inventions that escape the reader, but delight the spectator. The most remarkable of these is Minnie's artificial leg. The effectiveness of this on the stage has to be seen to be believed, but in itself it stamps Mr. Hughes as a dramatist.

A Comedy of Good and Evil is a remarkable play for a young man of twenty-four to have written, and the other plays in this volume are enough to confirm one's belief that in Mr. Richard Hughes the English theatre is likely to possess a considerable dramatist. Unfortunately, it is not easy to see how Mr. Hughes

is to obtain employment as a dramatist. He, like all our other young English dramatists, is at the mercy of a convention-ridden commercial organisation which controls the mechanism of the theatre. No ordinary West-end management would even dream of putting on *A Comedy of Good and Evil*, and it is probable that if it were put on as an isolated production it would fail ; but if Mr. Hughes and his contemporaries can go on writing plays there will come a time when some enterprising buccaneer of imagination, some Diaghlieff of the drama, will raise the necessary capital, take a theatre, and give a twelve months' season of special plays produced with the greatest possible perfection, and then Mr. Hughes and our young English dramatists will come into their own, as Mr. Bernard Shaw did when Mr. H. Granville-Barker gave his celebrated Court Theatre season many years ago.

W. J. TURNER.

NOVELS.

THOSE BARREN LEAVES. By ALDOUS HUXLEY. (Chatto and Windus. 7s. 6d. net.)

When a conjuror produces pigeons from his hat, the success of the trick depends chiefly on his legerdemain, the animation of the birds, and their number ; a single pigeon would not surprise, a dead one would not convince. In *Antic Hay*, Mr. Huxley showed himself to be a master-conjuror. There, with inimitable virtuosity, he produced half a dozen characters, all of whom lived with that degree of restricted, self-conscious animation that one expects of the best pigeons in the hands of the best conjurors. Occasionally he sneered at the birds, but for the most part he watched their sophisticated flight with a smiling, satirical urbanity. Emily and Gumbiril, however, were signs that he was becoming bored with his own skill, and bored by the pigeons. Their introduction suggested that the complacent smile with which he faced his audience was growing wearisome, that he was beginning to distrust it. In *Those Barren Leaves* his dissatisfaction is more patent.

Like Chelifer, Mr. Huxley has long been aware of his undeniable talent for writing, but not content to forward journalistically the propagation of rabbits, he has used it as Cardan might have done, to investigate the artificialities and insincerities of life. He has never been completely anomphaloskeptic, it is true, but in *Those Barren Leaves* he considers more reverently and at greater length than before the possible validity of a transcendental point of view. It was as though, until now, he had been urged by a precocity of experience towards an immature scepticism. His self-consciousness, instead of being confined to the consideration of his technique, seemed to have vitiated his outlook, and to have impaired the spontaneity of his inspiration, so that he was left with a highly-developed means of expression that he was fearful of using lest he should betray a naïvety which he was accustomed

to mock. This dilemma he tried to solve by attributing his own doubts to all intellectual people, and satirising in them the scepticism which etiolated his own emotions and passions. The result was that he was forced to choose his characters from amongst the artistic and high-brow, and so he wrote *Chrome Yellow* and, more perfectly, *Antic Hay*.

In this latter book the majority of the characters are entertaining, but they have no reality ; without the vitality of Mr. Huxley's wit and cynicism they would collapse like sawdust dummies. Thus, since there is no other standard of life than their own by which to judge them, the satire lacks trenchancy. Emily's part in the story is slight, and Lypiatt, the transcendental artist, is laughed—at times, it is true, with regret—from the stage. When Mr. Huxley wishes to advance a theory of life other than cynical, he protects himself by expressing it through a character who is potentially risible, so that he himself may, if he wishes, escape the responsibility for it.

In *Those Barren Leaves* the tone of the satire is changed, for it is no longer the criticism of a cynic, but of a creative mind. Cardan, it is true, might have come in any of his other books, and Chelifer, Mrs. Aldwinkle and Mary Thriplow are only modifications of former characters, but Calamy represents a new point of view. For the first time in Mr. Huxley's work here is a character who, not content with a sceptical or hedonistic attitude to life, is yet, nevertheless, sanctioned by the fact that he is neither mocked nor condemned. There have been others who felt this same discontent, but they have either been unimportant or ultimately defeated. Calamy, however, is left at the end of the book to contemplate in solitude the problems of existence, and, though he is by no means triumphant, he feels "somehow reassured." It is, perhaps, unfortunate that his character is not more fully developed, for he is important as being the most humanly animated of any of the personalities yet attempted by Mr. Huxley, but the influence of his presence is felt throughout the book, adding to the other characterisation a truer sensibility. Whenever he appears, one is struck by his aloofness from the glib males and insipid females by whom Mrs. Aldwinkle is surrounded, and in the last chapter it is Calamy who, though more perplexed than his two companions, stands out most boldly. He still occasionally laughs at his own aspirations, but he does not sneer at his own earnestness when he says, "I'd like to find some more serious occupation" (than those followed by his associates), and, what is more important, Mr. Huxley shows his sympathy for the man he has created. He is no longer shamefaced at producing a character who thinks that "one might be able to burrow one's way right through the mystery and really get at something—some kind of truth, some explanation."

It is obvious that this review is not an attempt to directly criticise *Those Barren Leaves*, but rather to indicate the tendency

of Mr. Huxley's mind as revealed by his work ; for it is chiefly in as much as it does this that his latest book is interesting. Intrinsically it shows little advance on *Antic Hay* : the language, descriptive power and wit of the former are common to both, the plot is less adroitly handled, and, with one exception, the characterisation is not improved. If, however, one is right in concluding from this exception—and from other hints less obvious—that Mr. Huxley is writing from a richer and better assimilated experience of life, then *Those Barren Leaves* is important. One would be justified in expecting from him a great book ; for up till now he has only written what is brilliant, witty, learned, but of the second or non-creative order.

SERENA BLANDISH, OR THE DIFFICULTY OF GETTING MARRIED. By A LADY OF QUALITY (Heinemann, 7s. 6d. net).

In an age when the majority of writers are tiresomely eager to deliver their " message," or to lament with a cynical and confidential sophistication that they have none to announce, it is pleasing to find a Lady of Quality who is too well-bred to regret what she has not, or to dissemble what she has. *Serena Blandish* is a witty and improbable tale, nothing more or less. It is good because it is well written, and because, aiming at no very high achievement, it reaches its mark.

Serena's ingenuous candour is enlivened by her dispassionate contemplation of her lost virginity. In her moments of calmness she listens to the voice of experience warning her that " the poison in her eyes dissolved resolution and honour in men " without obtaining for her an honourable proposal of marriage, but in the presence of a suitor she is too kind-hearted to deny, too generous to demand payment. She occasionally sobs, but the remembrance of her beauty is always sufficient to console her. Even when she is awakened in the middle of her first night in the Countess Flor di Folio's house by the butler's assuring her that he had not come to ruin her, she is not at a loss. Though hardly awake, she replies without perturbation, " I am ruined already." One is glad that in the end she marries a Count, and one's pleasure is not diminished at discovering that he is " the illegitimate son of a Portuguese negress, by her first lover, a Frenchman," for by that time Serena is as cynically temperate in her views as the Lady of Quality. She is a tragic figure, but her reflections on life are so apt and unusual that one does not pity her, and the pert naivety of her repartee disarms sympathy. In her many encounters with men she is often menaced, but never in danger ; she realises that she cannot lose what she no longer possesses.

THE CONSTANT NYMPH. By MARGARET KENNEDY. (Heinemann, 7s. 6d. net.)

It is not surprising that *The Constant Nymph* should have been so well received by the critics, nor that their acclamation should have been somewhat exaggerated, for within the circumscription of its kind it is undoubtedly a good book. There has, however, been a tendency to mistake the kind, and to overrate its possibilities. Since criticism is continually hampered by its inability to use absolute terms of approbation or condemnation, it is obliged to fall back on the unscientific method of subdivision in order to give a more definite meaning to the words good and bad. So, in this case, one must further qualify *The Constant Nymph* by saying that it is a good *melodramatic* novel, and by adding—perhaps arbitrarily—that if this opinion is correct, the word great is not applicable to it.

The idea which in both her books Miss Kennedy has chiefly considered, is that the differences apparent in the behaviour of the artist and the non-artist are the phenomena of a difference in their essence. Scientific psychology has shown that this idea is fallacious; Miss Kennedy has shown that it is a fertile source of plots. The shadow of Sanger, and Dodd in the flesh, represent the vital, untameable spirit of art struggling against philistinism and the limitations of existence, and in this lies the weakness of the book. Real feeling is not there, for neither Dodd nor Sanger struggles, but only an idea, a conception, so vague as to be meaningless. Had Dodd been identified with this idea, or had the idea been made concrete, then a problem would have been posed out of which great tragedy might have sprung, for all tragedy is founded on the incompatibility of two ideas, two facts, or a fact and an idea. When either of these is not completely convincing, the tragedy becomes melodramatic, and that is what has happened here. Every incident important to the main story is caused by Dodd's part in it, and he is only convincing if one regards his music as having the significance which he and Miss Kennedy give it. To do this it is not sufficient to assume that the artistic function is an important and engrossing one; one must be made to believe that it is so in this specific case. But the book has not that effect. It is not sufficient to know that Dodd's conducting was impressive, that his talent was unrecognised and revolutionary, that he was passionate, amoral, callous to anyone's feelings but his own, and irregular in his habits. These are the conventional, ready-made attributes of the artist which could be taken from dozens of second-rate novels; unless they are made circumstantial they are mere extravaganza.

Where Miss Kennedy has eminently succeeded is in the manipulation of an engrossing and intricate plot, and in the drawing of the minor characters, of whom more than one are amplifications of

those in her first novel, *The Ladies of Lyndon*. There is a marked improvement in her style, and the use she makes of language, and the dialogue is less diffuse in *The Constant Nymph* than in its predecessor. Teresa and Florence are both flesh and blood figures. The poignancy of their tragedies is real, for though Dodd himself does not convince, their belief in him and what he stands for is living and cogent.

D. M. G.

LIFE OF JAMES ELROY FLECKER. By GERALDINE HODGSON, D.Litt. Blackwell. 12s. 6d.

THE ordinary biographer, as we know him, is an Old Man of the Sea straddling a victim whose stature scarcely exceeds his own; the commonplace mind is presented with slow-motion by double-exposure photography.

Minor politicians are written up by still more minor politicians, industrial magnates by advertise-ment managers, actresses by salaried husbands, philanthropists by sentimentalists, sporting peers by journalistic touts, exiled princesses by unemployed courtiers, private prodigies by adoring mothers, and God—season after season—by epileptics and rationalists. Biography has become the most formless of forms, outraging literary canons far more importantly than those of taste. The only thing to do about the mass of such books is to class them as sociological phenomena and admit that they add to the fun of life.

Sometimes, however, the subject suffers so badly from the prepossessions or insufficient equipment of the writer that a protest becomes due. James Elroy Flecker, for instance, needs an intelligent biographer: a decade after his death the need becomes vital, for that is the first great testing-period for the reputations of poets. Dr. Geraldine Hodgson's *Life* is sentimental and prudish in its interpretation of Flecker's personality, conceited and irrelevant in its treatment of his poetry. She is at great pains to exonerate Flecker from charges of "idleness, unpracticalness, untidiness," and of "rioting in the fantastic" (!), and fills half her space with banal details of his unexceptional boyhood. The two most interesting events in his life—his broken engagement and his life in the East—are described scantily, hastily and with camouflage. As for his poetry, Dr. Hodgson considers it to be "not only singular in his generation but in our Literature," and makes that belief an excuse for a stale dissertation on a number of modern French poets, whose affinities with Flecker are less demonstrated than taken for granted. No English poet was ever quite "singular in our Literature"; certainly Flecker was not; and it is the business of his critics to give him a name and place in our own tradition. Dr. Hodgson's evaluation leaves him the bastard of two cultures.

B. H.

Among New Books

GRACE AFTER MEAT. By JOHN CROWE RANSOM. Hogarth Press, 4s. 6d.

In Mr. Ransom Mr. Robert Graves has discovered, for England, one of the most accomplished and promising American poets. It is, perhaps, more depressing than surprising that work of such quality, produced over a number of years, should have met with small recognition; this poetry is rooted too truly in tradition to make a lightning appeal to the gang of literary sensationalists, too serious in originality to endear itself to the wider audience of literary sentimentalists. Certain strands in these poems connect up with the "cerebral" style of Mr. T. S. Eliot, and the astute silver-age pastorals of Mr. Robert Frost, but Mr. Ransom is a poet of deeper reserves than Mr. Eliot, and of wider range than Mr. Frost. We hope that this twenty-poem volume will soon be followed by a larger selection.

POEMS OF THIRTY YEARS. By GORDON BOTTOMLEY. Constable. 21s.

Mr. Bottomley's poetry is among the most original produced by the Edwardian generation. He was aware of a transition in poetic technique, and his attempt to harmonise conflicting elements of rhythm and idiom requires a close examination.

A FOOL I' THE FOREST: A PHANTASMAGORIA. By RICHARD ALDINGTON. Allen & Unwin. 5s.

A very vigorous expression of the disorder and unease of the modern mind, in which imaginative gaiety has been killed by savage experiences and the intellect discredited by its naïve credulity towards scientific mumbo-jumbo. Mr. Aldington makes his free-verse a trenchant instrument for satire, but it is hardly organised sufficiently to express the loss of harmony poetically.

THREE FURTHER PLAYS BY LUIGI PIRANDELLO. Translated from the Italian by DR. ARTHUR LIVINGSTON. Dent. 10s. 6d.

By this time the work of Pirandello should need no bush. The three plays are called *Each in His Own Way*, *The Pleasure of Honesty* and *Naked*.

HARVEST IN POLAND. By GEOFFREY DENNIS. Heinemann. 7s. 6d.

Much of Mr. Dennis's creative force is dissipated by the incoherence of his plot; the incidents at Oxford and in Paris are an uneconomical use of material, which prolongs the story without giving it consistency. That part of the action which takes place in Poland would have gained much in power if the characters of Weronika, Karol and Emile had been better exploited—the leaven of their "sanity" would have thrown into relief the hysteria of the others. As it is, the tension is too great; an effect in no way relieved by Mr. Dennis's style, which is bad baroque, with coarse and damaged carving. When, however, he is writing of diabolism or the effects of intuitive terror, he is at times surprisingly convincing, though his "chatty" familiarity with the Principles of Good and Evil is often distasteful.

THE LITTLE KAROO. By PAULINE SMITH. Jonathan Cape. 4s. 6d.

Within the limited range of experience of which she writes, Miss Smith shows profound emotional power and a sense of clear representation. Each story stands firmly on its own legs and each character is an individual conception, and this in spite of a common setting and a single method of treatment. The dignity of her prose—undoubtedly influenced by the Bible—saves the sentiment from that mawkishness to which it tends; the atmosphere is well sustained. It is a simple book, but shows great promise.

THE CALENDAR

MR. TASKER'S GODS. By T. F. POWYS. Chatto and Windus. 7s. 6d.

Mr. Powys knows life in the country, and his village setting is admirably done, but his portraits of the inhabitants are discoloured by his preoccupation with the squalid and vicious side of their lives. Mr. Tasker is a dairyman who worships his swine, buys a vicious dog in the hope that it will kill his tramp father, and wakes his daughter by throwing her across the room. Almost all the other characters are similarly actuated by lust or greed or cruelty, the exceptions by loving-kindness. Mr. Powys allows them no middle course, so that their future actions are too easily foreseen and one soon wearies of his distorted point of view.

THE LONDON SPY. By NED WARD. The Casanova Society. 25s.

A reprint, very well produced, of a journalistic enterprise which has survived because it gives a most vivid picture of the social life of London at the end of the seventeenth century. It stands between the pamphlets of Green and Dekker, on the one hand, and, among later offspring, the "Tom and Jerry" of Pierce Egan. It is not a book for the queasy reader; Ward had a turn of mind for bawdy humour. He is rather like a plebeian Petronius; his vigour, though nothing else, allows the comparison. His style is an interesting specimen of debased exuberance, though it has infinitely more real literary virtue than most respectable modern journalism.

OLD PINK 'UN DAYS. By J. B. BOOTH. Grant Richards. 21s.

As a document, this book has a similar value to *The London Spy*, though it will not last so long, for it has less personality and frankness, and less power of expression. It does not evoke the "Bohemian gaiety" of the late Victorian period with the forcefulness with which Ward suggests the squalid vitality of his London. The staff of *The Sporting Times*, to which Mr. Booth belonged, was in touch with everybody and everything that mattered in the world of pleasure—the Stage, the Turf and the Ring.

THE THREAD OF ARIADNE. By ADRIAN STOKES. Kegan Paul. 6s.

The relativity of truth (even the relativity of that statement) is the theme of Mr. Stokes's divagation. It opens splendidly and is in parts extremely interesting, especially in those parts where he describes the experiences, mental and physical, which came to him on his journey round the world. His attempt to destroy the validity of concepts with conceptual weapons is necessarily tiresome. This is a first book; we shall see in his next book whether Mr. Stokes realises the importance of his own statement—"as I am fighting your thoughts and words, I need Art."

JOHN KEATS: LIFE AND LETTERS. By AMY LOWELL. Jonathan Cape.
(2 vols.) 42s.

PRINCIPLES OF LITERARY CRITICISM. By I. A. RICHARDS. Kegan Paul. 10s. 6d.

A remarkable synthetic effort; Mr. Richards dissociates all the familiar ideas of aesthetic values. He lays down a track which he thinks will lead to a firmer basis for the appraisal of values. A book which will be referred to again.